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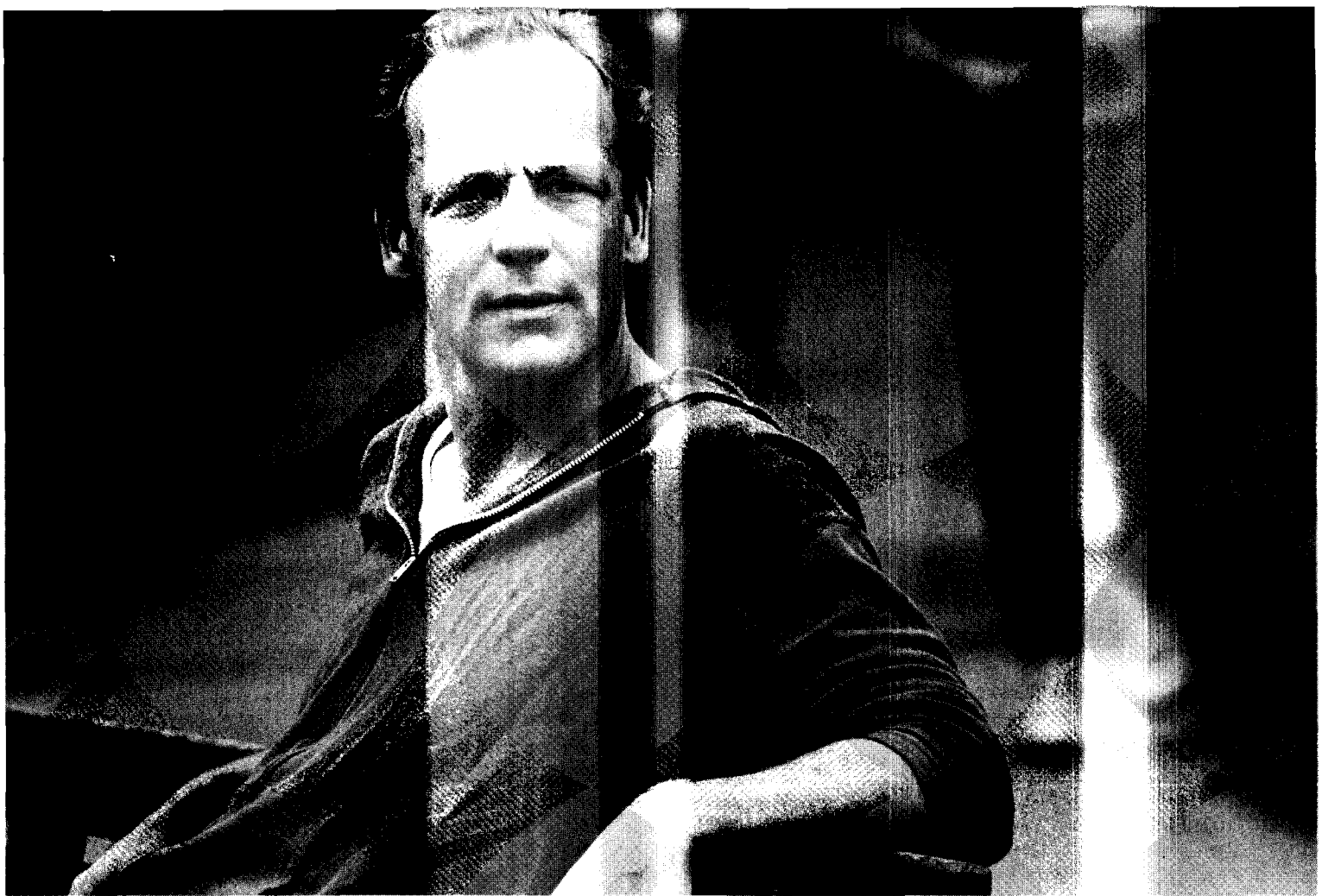
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FROM WASHINGTON

DOHRN AGAIN

They were careless people, Tom and Daisy—they smashed up things and creatures and then retreated back into their money or their vast carelessness, or whatever it was that kept them together, and let other people clean up the mess they had made. . . .

—*The Great Gatsby*

Whatever gave Scott Fitzgerald the idea that there are no second acts in American lives? It all depends on who you are and who you know. Consider Bernadine Dohrn and Bill Ayers, former heads of the Weatherman faction of SDS. Dohrn and Ayers emerged from a decade of hiding in 1980, married in 1982, and live with their three children in Manhattan. The papers reported last month that Dohrn, a 1967 graduate of the University of Chicago Law School, is working in the litigation department at the New York office of Sidley & Austin, a prestigious Chicago law firm, and has applied for admission to the New York bar.

Dohrn's attorney, Don H. Reuben, told *The New York Times*: "She's so conservative she's dull. I suspect it's children, the law, life and reading *Time Magazine*." He told *The Washington Post*: "She's a yuppie. She has evolved from revolutionary to square." Imagine that.

But this isn't a "Big Chill" saga of lost youthful idealism, or a case of that political aging process known as "drifting to the right." For one thing, Dohrn and Ayers weren't just another pair of student protesters. They were important figures in SDS's move toward violence, which eventually led to several deaths. They believed that protest politics and the youth culture were an explosive combination, and were eager to

light the fuse. At the crucial June 1969 SDS convention, it was Dohrn who announced the purge of the opposing "progressive labor" faction. (P.L., lunatic in its own way, favored close-cropped hair, adopted a more traditional Marxist class analysis, and eschewed anarchic violence in favor of organizing American workers for the big uprising.)

The name "Weatherman" came from the Bob Dylan lyric, "You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows." Later, in deference to feminist sensibilities, the group was renamed the Weather Underground. Weatherman's philosophy, as summarized by Ayers, was: "Kill all the rich people. Break up their cars and apartments. Bring the revolution home, kill your parents, that's where it's really at."

Weatherman's big moment came in October 1969, when it staged the "Days of Rage" in Chicago. Although the organizers promised thousands of angry rioters, only 300 showed up (along with almost as many disappointed reporters). These few stalwarts duly set a bonfire of park benches and went on a window-smashing rampage until dispersed by police. On the second day, Dohrn led a special charge of women, wearing helmets and armed with lead pipes, against "that bastion of the imperialist army," a draft induction center. The next month, November, Weatherman tried, with little success, to foment violence at the huge and overwhelmingly peaceful Moratorium-Mobilization antiwar march in Washington.

The leaders of Weatherman soon became frustrated at trying to stage mass rioting without any masses. So at the end of 1969, they met in a "National War Council" and decided to go underground, where they would become "urban guerrillas." Dohrn declared it was time for "armed struggle" and praised the example of the Charles Manson family: "Dig it. First they killed those pigs, then they ate dinner in the same room with them, then they even shoved a fork into a victim's stomach."

Barely two months later, on March 6, 1970, an explosion destroyed a town house in lower Manhattan that turned out to be a Weatherman bomb factory. Three people were killed, including Diana Oughton, Bill Ayers's longtime girlfriend. (When they met in 1965,

says Thomas Powers in his book *Diana: The Making of a Terrorist*, "Ayers was boyish, articulate, good-looking . . . not yet a revolutionary but already experienced in captivating girls with a combination of charm and social anger.") The next month police found another bomb factory in a Chicago apartment rented by Dohrn and two other women.

Over the next several years, bombs went off sporadically at the Capitol, the Pentagon, and various other government and corporate offices. One, at New York City police headquarters in June 1970, exploded shortly after a "declaration of war" surfaced from Dohrn, promising, "Within the next fourteen days we will attack a symbol or institution of Amerikan [sic] injustice." Later missives from Dohrn and Ayers claimed credit for freeing Dr. Timothy Leary, the LSD man, from prison in California and for blowing up a statue of a policeman ("pig") in Chicago.

When Dohrn and Ayers resurfaced in 1980, she was unapologetic. She accused the U.S. of "unspeakable crimes" and said she still believed "in the necessity of underground work." Bombing conspiracy charges against the couple had been dropped in the mid-1970s because of illicit government surveillance. Prosecutions for the bombings themselves were never pursued. As a result, Ayers was charged with nothing. Dohrn was allowed to plead bargain for three years of probation on charges stemming from the Days of Rage.

In October 1981 Weatherwoman Kathy Boudin, who had escaped the exploding town house and hadn't been seen since, was arrested while fleeing an armed robbery in which three people were killed. Dohrn refused to cooperate with a grand jury investigating the massacre the next year. She accused the government of "illegality, lies, and misconduct." At that time (only three years ago) her lawyer described her to the court as being "intractable in her views and beliefs to the point of fanaticism." The undoubted reason he said this is that you can't be jailed for contempt of court if the judge is convinced you'll never change your mind. The judge wasn't convinced, and Dohrn went to jail. But she was released seven months later, without ever agreeing to cooperate. Now she

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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CORRESPONDENCE

QUOTA QUIBBLE

To the editors:

David A. Bell alleges in his article "The Triumph of Asian-Americans" (July 19&22) that a Princeton professor, Uwe Reinhardt, told a *New York Times* reporter that "Princeton has an unofficial quota for Asian-American applicants."

I did not tell the reporter any such thing. On the contrary, I told the reporter that I had no idea whatsoever whether or not there existed such a quota and that my interest in the matter was kindled solely by one incident that occurred some years ago during the admission process at our school. Mr. Bell should have verified so controversial an assertion with me or with the reporter of *The New York Times*.

It probably is the case that, were admission to the Ivy League based strictly on quantifiable academic criteria, a higher proportion of Jewish and Asian-Americans would be found in their undergraduate bodies. The Ivy League universities, however, use a variety of additional criteria—quite legitimately so. Use of such criteria does not in itself constitute the erection of a quota against any particular group (although it may seem to do so).

I would add that, in the meantime, Princeton's office of admissions has provided data to persuade at least me of the absence of a quota against Asian-Americans on this campus. As far as I am concerned, the university has responded openly and properly to questions that had arisen on the issue and has thereby laid the issue to rest.

UWE E. REINHARDT
Princeton University

FOUNDATION FRACAS

To the editors:

Although we welcomed James Rosenthal's affectionate barbs in his piece on the Heritage Foundation ("Heritage Hype," September 2), we would like to clarify two points:

First, Mr. Rosenthal said there is an "element of exaggeration" in the claim that dozens of people affiliated with the Heritage Foundation had ended up in government jobs. Mr. Rosenthal writes: "Louis Cordia asserts that Heritage has placed 75 people in government jobs, although a foundation spokesman can

provide only 39 names." Mr. Cordia was talking, conservatively I might add, about the number of people affiliated with Heritage, either from our staff or those active in our Academic Resource Bank, who now have policy-making jobs in the administration or on Capitol Hill. This list provided by the spokesman, on the other hand, dealt only with immediate members of the Heritage Foundation family: present and former staff members, members of our board of trustees, adjunct scholars, and members of our editorial board. Even that list is out of date. Another significant measure of impact is the number of contributors to our *Mandate for Leadership* series who have ended up in government jobs—in many cases in policy-making jobs where they were able to implement the policies they themselves had recommended. At last count several dozen *Mandate* contributors had been appointed to such jobs.

The other criticism involves something we hold most dear: our reputation. After noting that "the combination of conservative principles and effective politics" has won the Heritage Foundation support from corporate America, Mr. Rosenthal asserts: "Heritage can be counted on to put aside conservative principles if they conflict with corporate interests." Nothing could be further from the truth.

One thing Heritage has never been accused of (until Mr. Rosenthal's article) is that we shill for corporate interests. Mr. Rosenthal argues that our "lukewarm" support for the Reagan tax-reform plan arises from our concern not to upset the energy lobby. He cites as proof the fact that our tax analysts have opposed elimination of deductions for the oil and gas industries. Well, I can assure you that any plaudits we received from Texas oilmen on that issue were drowned in the criticism we got from them for our attack on the oil import fee. And we did not exactly endear ourselves to energy companies with our opposition to the Synfuels Corporation and the Clinch River breeder reactor.

And have you ever heard of free trade? The Heritage Foundation's strong opposition to any form of protectionism has led literally to corporate donors telephoning us to let us hear the sound of checks made out to the Heri-

tage Foundation being ripped to pieces. As THE NEW REPUBLIC undoubtedly realizes, if there's one thing that irritates portions of the corporate community, it is a commitment to free trade. In fact, of all of the barbs Mr. Rosenthal could have aimed our way, claiming we flack for corporate interests is one of the silliest. If that's the impression he got, however, maybe we're not as slick at selling our point of view as THE NEW REPUBLIC gives us credit for.

PHILLIP N. TRULUCK
*Executive Vice President
The Heritage Foundation
Washington, D.C.*

James Rosenthal replies:

After repeated requests for proof to the statement that Heritage has placed 75 foundation affiliates in government jobs, I was, unfortunately, disappointed. The executive branch liaison said he wouldn't provide names for fear that it would jeopardize the appointee's right to privacy. Willa Johnson, former head of Heritage's Resource Bank, first promised me a full and thorough list of former Heritage affiliates and their government positions. She then not only failed to furnish a list but refused to return my repeated phone calls inquiring about the list.

Finally, by listing opposition to the Synfuels Corporation and the Clinch River breeder reactor as examples of Heritage's independence from corporate interest, Mr. Truluck only proves that Heritage knows when not to support wasteful and unpopular programs.

VOTING RIGHTS CLAPTRAP

To the editors:

Abigail Thernstrom (" 'Voting Rights' Trap," September 2) says that members of Congress were assured that the 1982 amendment to the Voting Rights Act would not affect the standards for preclearance. In fact, the Senate Judiciary Committee stated exactly the opposite: "In light of the amendment of section 2 [the "results" test], it is intended that a section 5 [preclearance] objection also follow if a new voting procedure itself so discriminates as to violate section 2." The House report made a similar statement.

EDWARD STILL
Birmingham, Alabama



THE NEW REPUBLIC

OCTOBER 14, 1985

AFRAIDS

In 1983, the latest year for which statistics are available, 130 people, 55 of them students, died in school bus accidents. In that same year, as in all other years to date, zero students were diagnosed with AIDS infections incurred at school. If you were to stand up at your local school board meeting and demand that school buses be banned on the grounds that "any risk, however small, is too great when children are involved," you would not be treated seriously. Yet that is precisely the logic that is carrying the day in many school districts about letting children with AIDS into the classroom.

It is true that not everything is known about AIDS, and it is understandable that parents wish to take no chances where the welfare of their children is concerned. But contrary to what they have been led to believe by many in the media, the transmission of AIDS is far from an utter mystery. As conservatives often point out in other contexts, the search for a perfectly risk-free environment is not only futile, but it also creates costs of its own. In the case of AIDS, the cost is partly a moral one.

The AIDS issue has now spawned a second epidemic—a wave of hysteria whose symptoms include ostracism, discrimination, and violence. As with other communicable maladies, we'll give this hysteria a name: Acute Fear Regarding AIDS or, more simply, AFRAIDS. Surveys indicate that whereas AIDS has thus far struck only a small fraction of the population, AFRAIDS has already infected well over a hundred million people. According to a recent *New York Times*/CBS poll, 47 percent of Americans believe it is possible to catch AIDS from a

shared drinking glass, 28 percent implicate contaminated toilet seats, and 12 percent consider themselves endangered by a shared office environment or even a carrier's touch. Meanwhile, a *Washington Post* survey found that 34 percent of those polled considered it unsafe to "associate" with an AIDS victim—even when no physical contact was involved—and an additional 22 percent were uncertain.

Thanks to such misconceptions, many unlucky AIDS casualties, already laboring under a death sentence, are victimized a second time—thrown out of jobs, apartments, and schools, harassed and discharged by the military, and rejected by roommates, friends, and family. Worse, patients have been barred from hospitals, denied ambulance services, and refused mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Organizations and families offering refuge to patients have been greeted with bomb warnings, death threats, vandalism, and assault.

The worst form of the AFRAIDS contagion is transmission of the disease from parents to children. In Queens, fear of an AIDS-afflicted second-grader triggered a boycott in two school districts that kept over a quarter of the area's 47,000 elementary and junior high school students at home on the first day of classes. The September 23 *Newsweek* featured a sickening cover photograph of children carrying placards against other children ("NO AIDS CHILDREN IN DISTRICT 27"). Thirteen-year-old Ryan White, banned from school in Indiana, observed pointedly about this state of affairs, "It stinks."

Since August authorities at the Federal Centers for Disease Control have been trying to arrest the spread of misinformation and panic. In a recent report, the center concluded that "casual person-to-person contact, as among schoolchildren, appears to pose no risk." Again, in a September 13 interview in *The New York Times*, Dr. Martha Rogers, an AIDS epidemiologist at the CDC, assured the public that "we obviously believe the evidence thus far indicates that transmission by casual contact will never occur." Unfortunately, these efforts to alleviate panic have inadvertently backfired: decisive judgments such as "never" and "no risk" have been overshadowed in the public mind by caveats such as "appears," "believe," "thus far," and "indicates." Intended simply as gestures of obeisance to scientific protocol, these formal qualifications have been widely misinterpreted as confessions of general ignorance on the part of the medical profession.

Naturally, this atmosphere of uncertainty has encouraged the casual transmission of AFRAIDS. In July the cover of *Life* magazine alerted readers, "NOW NO ONE IS SAFE FROM AIDS." The word "AIDS," plastered in thick, blood-red letters, covered an area three inches tall and ten inches wide. Inside, the ostensible cause for alarm proved considerably thinner. What the article actually substantiated was that no one is safe from AIDS who has sex with a carrier or receives a contaminated blood transfusion.

Rupert Murdoch's *New York Post* has been at the forefront of the misinformation campaign. On September 12, the *Post*'s front page screamed, "SCHOOL COOK DIES OF AIDS." As if the hint of likely contamination weren't clear enough, the next day's cover followed with "Top doc's warning to schools: KEEP AIDS KIDS OUT." "Top doc" turned out to be Ronald Rosenblatt, a Queens internist

with neither firsthand nor, apparently, thirdhand knowledge of reliable AIDS research.

The best evidence that AIDS can't be transmitted through casual contact is that not one of the family members of the 13,000 presently known AIDS victims (except for sexual partners and children infected in the womb) has developed AIDS symptoms, and none who has been tested is carrying the virus. As the CDC's Rogers observes, if you can't catch the bug by years of hugging, kissing, touching, and sharing food, utensils, and bathrooms with a carrier, chances are virtually nonexistent that you'll contract it just from sharing a classroom or an office. The AIDS virus has been isolated in saliva, tears, and urine. However, Rogers reports, "not one case of transmission from these fluids has ever been documented."

Skeptics raise two points most frequently in the face of this evidence. First, they note that the source of every AIDS victim's virus is not known. Specifically, ten percent of juvenile cases and six percent of adult cases remain unaccounted for. However, these leftover cases reflect procedural difficulties more than substantive doubts. Many juvenile cases cannot be formally closed simply because the mother, suspected of having passed the virus during pregnancy, is deceased or otherwise inaccessible. As for the adults, their cases will stay open as long as their lips remain sealed. The suspected routes—prostitute contact and homosexual activity—are not the sorts of hobbies a family man wants to reveal to his wife and children. In a recent study, a third of the unclassified adult male victims interviewed confessed to prostitute contact, and researchers hope and expect that further admissions will be forthcoming.

Second, skeptics point out that the incubation period of AIDS is several years. Only recently has there been a significant number of AIDS victims. Who is to say they

aren't transmitting the disease in ways that won't become tragically apparent until years from now? In fact, the average time between infection and diagnosis of AIDS is one year for children, two for adults. AIDS has been under study for seven years, and yet not a single case of casual transmission has surfaced so far. What's more, among the 300 family members of AIDS victims who have had blood tests, none has shown the presence of the virus.

AIDS, like other infectious diseases, is transmittable after infection, and not just when the symptoms appear. The people



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developing AIDS now have been carriers for a long time. If the disease were transmittable in ways other than those that already have been established, this would show up now, not several years from now.

Whether with reckless opportunism or with the best of intentions, many publications—and even some physicians—have underscored routine uncertainties and voiced answerable doubts, falsely portraying this as the standpoint of “caution.” The ironic result is the present epidemic explosion of AFRAIDS. Much of the public is now hopelessly confused, skeptical even to the point of questioning the sincerity of medical authorities. Dazed by the flurry of information and misinformation, lay people have simply resigned from the debate, concluding that the doctors don’t have satisfactory answers. They await the day when medicine comes forth and declares unequivocally, in the words of President Reagan, “This we know for a fact, that it is safe.” But this declaration is not likely to issue from the scrupulously cautious scientific community in this decade, perhaps not even in this century.

The question is, what do we do in the meantime? There is always—on a theoretical level—a risk that the AIDS kid at your local elementary school will engage your seven-year-old son in a fistfight, that both will bleed profusely, and that somehow the dastardly virus will worm its way across. There’s even a hypothetical possibility that your child will catch the ailment just by drinking from the same water fountain or sitting in the same classroom. All logic and experience belies these fears, but they cannot be dismissed with absolute certainty. To some parents, landlords, and employers, this doesn’t matter: a theoretical risk seems reason enough to exclude the infected individual from public life. Isn’t that the counsel of caution? Isn’t that the “safe” option?

Unfortunately, there is no safe option. Barring a child from school or excluding an adult from shelter and employment is not cost-free. It involves the expulsion not simply of a virus but of a human being. That must count for something. As a palpable cruelty, it seems a lot to ask for the sake of dispelling the darkest fantasies of the imagination.

NOTEBOOK

□ ANXIETY GRIDLOCK:

Study Sees Atom War as Causing AIDS Epidemic

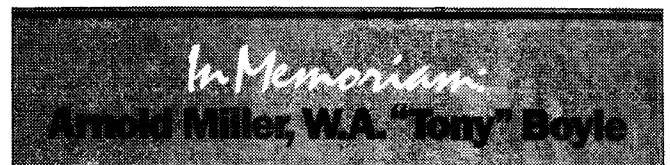
—*The New York Times*, September 22

□ WHITE FLAG DEPARTMENT: An unnamed “authoritative administration official” briefed White House reporters September 19 on the coming U.S.-Soviet summit talks. According to *The Washington Post*, “The official said Reagan will tell Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev . . . that the United States has fallen so far behind Moscow’s offensive nuclear buildup that four decades of reliance on

offensive deterrence ‘may not work in the years ahead.’ ” Something wrong here? As we read this, Reagan plans to tell Gorbachev that the United States can no longer deter a Soviet nuclear attack. No doubt Gorbachev will be pleased to hear the news, and we can only hope he doesn’t believe it. The administration’s point, of course, is to make the case for Star Wars defenses. But surrendering in advance is carrying this enthusiasm too far.

□ GET FAMOUS QUICK: Something called Celebrity Service International now publishes a daily bulletin devoted exclusively to the doings of famous people in Washington. The head of the Washington office is Vicky Bagley, a socialite of the Carter era who later turned to real estate and now, through some natural process of social entropy, is reduced to this. For \$1,500 per year, celebrity hounds get hot inside tips on “Washington Arrivals,” some of whom are TV stars and some of whom are people like “Herbert Lister, President, Allstate Life Insurance Company,” who is in town for the “U.S. Jaycees Healthy American Fitness Leaders Awards Conference.” A lucky “Celebrity of the Day” receives a photo and short bio. Clients also can call the service up to five times a day for more information. The service boasts a Rolodex of 250,000 celebrity phone numbers. And just what kind of superstars are covered in the bulletin? Well, the service says that all subscribers contribute information. So if you send in your money now, and then tip off the service at (202) 337-9200 about your upcoming vacation in the nation’s capital, you too can be a Washington celebrity.

□ MINE WORKERS’ MEMORY HOLE:



Two former UMWA presidents, whose terms of office extended from 1963 to 1979, died within six weeks of each other.

W. A. “Tony” Boyle, the 11th president of the UMWA (1963-1972), died May 31 in the Wilkes-Barre (Pa.) General Hospital of heart failure.

Arnold Miller, the union’s 12th president (1972-1979), died July 12 in the Charleston (W. Va.) Area Medical Center of complications arising from several factors, including a stroke, pneumonia and black lung disease.

Miller, the son of an immigrant, was born in Bald Butte, Mont.



This is how the August 1985 issue of *The United Mine Workers Journal* marks the deaths of two former union presidents. The article says that Boyle died “in the Wilkes-Barre [Pennsylvania] General Hospital,” but fails to mention that Boyle was actually serving a life sentence in prison, having been convicted for arranging the murder of the man who ran against him for president in 1969, Jock Yablonski. Boyle’s thugs also killed Yablonski’s wife and daughter. Miller inherited Yablonski’s reform

movement and won the presidency after a federal court ordered a new election in 1972. Talk about moral equivalence!

□ EDWARD R. MURROW CITATION: CBS is so hard up for cash, following the stock-repurchase program it initiated to rid itself of Ted Turner's hostile tender offer, that it recently announced a massive layoff of employees, including the elimination of 125 jobs—one-tenth of the staff—at its legendary news division. But the network has managed to scrape together enough pennies to sign on as a client of the new Washington "consulting" firm founded by Michael Deaver, former White House deputy chief of staff. CBS is reported to have been impressed that Deaver accompanied Nancy Reagan on her visit to Katharine Graham's house in Martha's Vineyard last summer. Deaver's retainer is \$350,000 a year.

□ A COUPLA CORRECTIONS: In Tony Kaye's article "On the Hill: Here Comes the Bribe" (October 7), several figures were given for the "net worth" of various congressmen. These numbers actually reflect the congressmen's total assets, not their net worth, which is assets minus liabilities. Due to an editing error, Craig Pyes's article "Private General" (September 30) quoted a *Washington Post* story describing Earl Thomas, an official of the World Anti-Communist League in 1977, as "a former Nazi Party stormtrooper." The correct quote is "a former American Nazi Party stormtrooper."

WHITE HOUSE WATCH

GERRYMEANDERING

REMEMBER all that talk from President Reagan about federalism and judicial restraint? You know, the pleas Reagan has been making for years that federal judges should interpret the Constitution narrowly and keep their noses out of political and social affairs. Well, Attorney General Edwin Meese III is on board. But the Republican National Committee isn't. And political aides at the White House, including Edward J. Rollins, aren't either.

The apostasy at the RNC and White House is a triumph of political expediency over conservative principle. On October 7 the Supreme Court takes up the issue of partisan gerrymandering, and the Republican Party has a good deal to gain. If the Supreme Court authorizes judges to interfere with the way state legislatures, most of them Democratic, draw district lines, Republican officials believe the party might gain as many as two dozen House seats. That wouldn't give the party control of the House,

where the Democratic edge is now 253 to 182, but it would put Republicans within striking distance. Without a favorable ruling, according to Rollins, the party's prospects of winning the House in the foreseeable future are dim. "There's no doubt about it," he says, the Court case is pivotal.

IRONICALLY, the case involves gerrymandering by Republican legislators in Indiana. In 1981 they redrew the districts for the state Senate and House to accommodate new census figures. Their goal, as House Speaker J. Roberts Dailey put it, was "to save as many incumbent Republicans as possible." They succeeded. Even in 1982, a strong Democratic year, Republicans retained firm control of the legislature. A group of Democrats sued on the ground that, though the principle of one-man, one-vote had been adhered to, their voting strength had been systematically minimized in violation of the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment. The suit was considered a long shot at best, but last December a federal appeals panel, in a vote of two to one, ruled that partisan gerrymandering violates the Constitution. The Supreme Court agreed in March to hear the case, scheduling oral argument for the first day of the 1985-86 term.

This threw the Reagan crowd into a tizzy. The case could be the Republican Party's ticket to national dominance, so shouldn't the Justice Department file a scorching friend-of-the-court brief against partisan reapportionment? Republicans might suffer in Indiana, one of 11 states in which the party controls the legislature. But think of the effect a ban on partisan gerrymandering would have on the 28 states where Democrats are in charge. The problem with such a brief was that it not only would contradict Reagan's view but also would conflict with what the Justice Department was arguing in other cases. For example, could the department insist on federalism and judicial restraint on issues like abortion but not on reapportionment that met the equal population guideline? Not with a straight face.

Still, there were what one Justice official called "powerful forces in the administration" pressing the department to intervene. These were strongly resisted at Justice. Finally a compromise was reached. Justice stayed out of the case, but the RNC, which for all practical purposes is a branch of the Reagan administration, filed a brief. Justice officials make no secret of their disagreement with the RNC position. "They are activists," says Terry Eastland, Meese's spokesman and adviser. "They are asking the courts to invade an area that was properly left to the states. You'd never see a brief coming out of here that looks like the RNC brief."

In case you hadn't figured it out yet, the RNC takes the position of the Indiana *Democratic Party*, which wants the appeals panel's decision affirmed. The Republicans also conjure up a new political bugaboo, "equipopulous gerrymandering." They argue that "the law of redistricting is being outpaced by the technology of redistricting." Prior

Supreme Court rulings “dealt with the problems at hand—districts unequal in population or which discriminate racially.” But now “sophisticated partisan polling” and “computer technology” create districts of equal population that nevertheless tilt in one party’s favor and deny fair representation. This, the GOP brief says, calls for fresh judicial intervention.

By page five of the brief, the Republicans get at their real target—California, where Democrats pushed through a grotesque, computer-designed reapportionment scheme in 1981. The state’s congressional delegation in 1980 was 22 to 21 Democratic. In 1984, the brief says, “Democrats were elected to 27 of California’s 45 seats—60 percent of the seats—even though Republican congressional candidates actually received more votes than Democratic candidates (49.4 percent Republican to 48.3 Democratic).” What’s worse, Rollins claims, all the Democratic seats are impregnable.

If the RNC position prevails, the party is poised to file suit in nine states to seek a fairer drawing of district lines. California and Texas head the list, followed by Oklahoma, Illinois, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Massachusetts, and Tennessee. “These are just the states that have caught our eye,” says Jan Baran, the counsel of the Republican National Congressional Committee.

Until the appeals panel ruled last December, Democratic officials didn’t take the Indiana case seriously. “I don’t know of anybody who thought the lower court would make the ruling it did,” says Martin D. Franks, the executive director of the House Democratic Campaign Committee. “That’s what makes me uneasy about the Supreme Court.” Despite their alarm, national Democrats did not intervene in the case. The Democratic National Committee was too busy changing chairmen.

But California Democrats recognized the threat. The state’s Democratic congressional delegation filed a brief last March. Their brief, of course, sides with the *Indiana Republicans*. More recently, they hired an experienced political hand, Hope Warshaw, to publicize their side in the press. Guess whose rhetoric the California Democrats have adopted? Ronald Reagan’s, that old champion of restrained judges and states’ rights. In fact, though the delegation is as liberal as any in Congress, their brief tosses out buzzwords formerly used only by conservatives. It blasts judges “propelled by zeal to decide a novel federal constitutional claim” and warns against a “headlong rush to the heart of the [political] thicket.”

What worries California Democrats is that the judicial restrainers on the Court—Warren Burger, William Rehnquist, Sandra Day O’Connor—might let their Republican sympathies get the better of them. They could side with John Paul Stevens and Lewis Powell, who complained about partisan redistricting in a concurring opinion in a 1983 case, to form a majority. The result would be bad law but, if you’re a Republican, good politics.

FRED BARNES

ON THE HILL

PORN IN THE USA

I OFTEN DREAM of the day—and I know it’s coming soon—when I’m called to testify before a Senate oversight committee investigating the dire societal effects of country music, with its glorification of drinkin’, pill-takin’, chewin’, cheatin’, and just plain old low-rent behavior. My area of expertise is the inarguable link between the growing number of fat, bearded, violent country-music singers and fat, bearded, violent truckers.

“Mr. Chairman,” I’ll say, grim-visaged, “this is a subject I know all too well.” Once, during a hitchhike from Washington to Nashville, I caught an overnight ride with a 330-pound bearded trucker who called himself “Tiny.” In the previous 30 hours, Tiny—powered by diesel fuel, greasy food, and Black Beauties—had driven, without sleep, from Mississippi to Brooklyn and then back to northern Virginia.

“Want a sweet roll?” he said as I climbed in. “Uh, no thanks.” (He had already licked off all the icing and raisins.) “Well, I’ll just polish ‘em off. I flat *love* to eat, even when I’m taking speeders.” Oh, really? In 20 minutes I was in a truck stop diner watching Tiny snorkel his way through a mound of mashed potatoes and white gravy. After the splashing stopped, a woman with two small children walked over and told Tiny she was running away from her husband and needed to “go west” but didn’t know the way. So she followed us.

Tiny got on the CB and said he’d run into “a hot beaver.” Soon there was a small convoy of trucks dangerously jockeying for a look at her. Tiny eventually lost interest—“I’m too fat for that stuff”—so he ate again. Then he bought more speed at a rest stop. That night he ate twice more, careened onto the interstate shoulder to fight a trucker he’d been arguing with on the CB, showed me his .38 revolver, and fell asleep at the wheel and nearly drove off the highway.

“Much of this time, Mr. Chairman, Tiny was listening to tapes by Hank Williams Jr. . . .”

See the connection? If so, you would have felt right at home at the September 19 Senate Subcommittee on Communications hearing on what Senator Ernest Hollings kept calling “pone rock.” In general, every bad teen thing—arson, sex, suicide, assaults against parents—was ascribed to violent, drug-and-alcohol-glorifying, pornographic, and “occultic” rock lyrics.

But you probably know this already. I’ve attended dozens of congressional hearings, and I’ve never seen one covered this heavily. Thus you’ve also probably gathered that this hearing was more fun than, say, that day’s look at the use of tax refund offsets to collect non-tax federal debt. You’ve learned that Senator Albert Gore Jr. likes Frank Zappa and John Denver but not Twisted Sister—“And I’m not reluctant to say so.” You’ve read about Zappa mimick-

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NR30

ing Parents' Music Resource Center founders Tipper Gore and Susan Baker. You may even have seen news clips of a rock 'n' roll yeti named Dee Snider (founder of Twisted Sister) explaining, to a grim-visaged row of senators, the operative motifs in his "We're Not Gonna Take It" video, which shows a pushy, anti-rock dad being thrown down stairs and through windows.

"That video was simply meant to be a cartoon with human actors playing variations on the Roadrunner/Wile E. Coyote theme," he said. "Each stunt was selected from my extensive personal collection of Roadrunner cartoons. You'll note . . . that after *each* catastrophe our villain suffers through, in the next sequence he reappears unharmed by any previous attack, no worse for the wear."

UNFORTUNATELY, the standard coverage—because it is designed to provide a coherent summary of "what happened"—cannot properly convey the tenor of this hearing, which was distinguished largely by its tangential episodes. One reporter I talked to put it this way: "There's no lead . . . but that hearing would make a tremendous sidebar to something."

Now don't get me wrong. I realize there was a serious issue involved. Some of this music really is the worst. An emphatic, high-speed, 20-minute Parents' Music Resource Center summary of the genre ended with lyrics from an obscure band called Dementor: "Listen, you little slut, do as you are told. / Come with daddy for me to pour the gold. / Golden showers—all through my excrements you shall roam. / Bend up and smell my anal vapor. / Your face is my toilet paper." Believe me, I could get behind a move for anti-porn-rock legislation with real teeth. I'd like to see the government de-pants Dementor, AC/DC, and Motley Crue, bind them hand and foot, and toss them into the audience at a Holly Near concert.

But as was generally agreed one hour into the five-hour hearing, the government has no business in this. And parents could protect their children from this music if lyrics were made available prior to purchase. Thus it was reasonable to ask, as Senator James Exon did, "If no legislation or regulations are being considered, why are we holding this hearing?" Perhaps the senator was correct to insinuate that Senator Gore and Senator John Danforth—two of the emerging "Cosby Congressmen" who are not afraid to flex for family values—were making a blatant grab for publicity. For my part, I will not accuse these men—both of whom were originally uninterested in the issue, both of whom have wives on the PMRC—of any baser motive than being tired of sleeping on the couch.

And I must admit that, like the kid in line in front of me who had memorized all of Frank Zappa's liner notes and the 250 behind me, I was not thinking about the issues—I wanted to see the rock 'n' roll hearing. Specifically, I wanted to see Frank Zappa and Dee Snider tee it up with the high priestess of non sequitur, Senator Paula Hawkins.

Senator Hawkins's reaction to the behemoth Snider was

odd: she just stared. (I hope she is discreet enough to use a fake name on her entry in MTV's "Meet Twisted Sister" contest.) She was in better form during her questioning of the skinnier Frank Zappa. Somehow she got on the subject of "age labeling" of toys.

"Mr. Zappa, toy boxes may say, 'Suitable for five to seven years of age, or eight to 15' . . . which gives you some guidance to toys for your child. Do you object to that?"

"In a way I do. Because that means that somebody in an office someplace is making a decision about how smart my child is."

"Well . . . I'd be interested to see what toys your kids ever had."

"Why would you be interested?"

"Just as a point of interest."

"Well come on over to the house and I'll show 'em to you."

Other highlights likely to be ignored by the mainstream rock press:

Senator Hawkins again. Her cogent First Amendment analysis: "There is no absolute right to free speech. In my experience, no one has the absolute right to yell 'fire' in a theater. And I'd like that statement to be placed in the record."

The sight of aides and counsel snapping their fingers to Twisted Sister's "We're Not Gonna Take It" video behind the backs of the grim-visaged senators.

John Denver's "kids say the craziest things" anecdote. Senator Gore asked, "If you have a song that seems to glorify and promote suicide—" "Senator Gore, if I could only *count* the number of times that a child has come up to me saying, 'If I don't get your autograph, my mother is gonna kill me. . . .'"

Dee Snider's tips for uncertain parents. "As a parent and a rock fan, I know that when I see an album cover with a severed goat's head in the middle of a pentagram between a woman's legs—that's not the kind of album I want my three-year-old son listening to."

And Senator Paul Trible's momentous opening statement, which contained these phrases: "More than 2,300 years ago, Plato recognized that music is a powerful influence in our lives. . . ." "As the great Irish nationalist said. . . ." "Here I paraphrase John Donne. . . ." "In the words of George Will. . . ." "Indeed, repeated exposure to these lyrics is like sandpaper to the soul; it rubs raw the sensibilities. . . ." ". . . pushing children over the emotional precipice. . . ." "Mr. Chairman, I'm a senator, but I'm also a father. Being the [subcommittee head] of a family is the most important task I will ever have. . . ." And "I believe this may well be the most important hearing conducted by the Commerce Committee this year." A few minutes later he left.

ALEX HEARD

Alex Heard's latest article for TNR was "Mea Rambo" (July 29).

A cold Bud and a hot Regan.

FAMILY FEUD

THE SPIRIT OF détente permeates the West Wing. Just down the hall from the Oval Office, locker-room chatter can be heard about a new era of accommodation and conciliation, of mutual trust and respect, and hope for the future. But this isn't the spirit of Geneva we're talking about. It's more the spirit of Pelican's Wharf, after the Santa Barbara restaurant where White House Chief of Staff Donald T. Regan and National Security Adviser Robert C. (Bud) McFarlane lunched during the president's August vacation and agreed to call a halt to their months of squabbling.

Since that meal, Regan and McFarlane seem to be working together famously, and the mutual catcalling by their staffs has practically ceased. Nobody is silly enough to pretend the two ex-Marine lieutenant colonels are suddenly close; but Regan and McFarlane claim to have buried the hatchet, and not in each other's backs.

Don't be so sure. The truth is that Regan and McFarlane can't stand each other. Moreover, Regan has a well-deserved reputation for being as ruthless as he is charming. He comes from the don't-get-mad-get-even school of management, and still has the NSC adviser in his sights. And McFarlane isn't the shrinking violet his soft-spoken manner suggests. This spat is more papered over than patched up, mainly in deference to the need for internal harmony, as the White House prepares for the November summit meeting with Mikhail Gorbachev in Geneva.

A temporary cessation of hostilities notwithstanding, this is the most celebrated White House feud in more than a year. At its peak, Regan and McFarlane got into a screaming match that aides two offices removed could hear, giving rise to speculation—never credible—that McFarlane would resign after the summit to become ambassador to Japan or secretary of the Air Force. The principals' staffs inevitably got into the act as well—the Regan camp disparaging McFarlane as "Henry Kissinger Junior," and McFarlane's men deriding Regan as a geopolitical nincompoop.

By most accounts, this saga began with a nocturnal phone call to Ronald Reagan by McFarlane last spring. Neither side can remember exactly what the subject was. Regan believes it may have been a terrorist bombing in the Mideast; some vaguely recall a hijacking; others contend it was the shooting death of Army major Arthur Nicholson by a Soviet sentry in East Germany. In any event, Regan learned about it on the radio. Regan has an obsession for keeping informed. (After aides failed to tell him about an innocuous fire in the White House because they didn't want to bother him, he exploded, "Goddammit, I'm the chief of staff. I want to know what's going on around

here.") Miffed at being caught short, Regan complained to McFarlane, who had assumed Regan had also been notified in the middle of the night by the White House situation room. Chagrined, McFarlane issued what one source calls "a very strong order" to the Sit Room. Henceforth McFarlane would be called first in similar circumstances; he would call the president and then personally inform Regan.

That should have settled everything, but the friction continued. Regan had pledged early on that the NSC would continue to enjoy quasi-autonomous authority, but some on Regan's staff wanted to bring McFarlane's operation more clearly under their control. These aides repeatedly complained that although NSC paperwork destined for the president was routinely seen by Regan's staff, some background papers weren't being distributed to Regan aides whose predecessors had enjoyed that privilege during the tenure of James Baker. "It was the usual staff-level bickering," says one official, "but it got out of hand." Soon aides were telling Regan that McFarlane was jobbing him, and vice versa.

There were some genuine disagreements, though not over policy. McFarlane's staff resented Regan's tendency to talk about foreign policy with reporters; Vice Admiral John Poindexter, McFarlane's deputy and a man whose antipathy for dealing with the press is legendary, repeatedly complained. Poindexter and others are said to have been incensed, for example, when Regan anonymously told several reporters during the TWA hijacking crisis that the Israelis "have to read our mind" in deciding whether to free the several hundred political prisoners whose release the hijackers were demanding.

Regan is sensitive to his lack of foreign policy expertise and, while attempting to shore up his geopolitical foundation, has consistently maintained he isn't interested in a power grab. "I don't want to make foreign policy," he recently told *Newsweek*. "That's not my cup of tea. But I do want to know how foreign policy is being made. I want to participate in the process."

AFTER THE PHONE CALL incident, a handful of irritants exacerbated the state of play. A classified intelligence briefing landed on the president's desk one morning with an update added too late to make Regan's copy. Regan aides concluded—almost certainly in error—that McFarlane was back-channeling the chief of staff. Meanwhile, Regan was annoyed to find himself naked a couple of times when the president inquired about various foreign policy topics during one of their frequent private conversations. Regan is reliably known to believe that McFarlane wasn't intentionally withholding information from him, but nonetheless he was embarrassed about having to plead ignorance to the president.

Never known to mince words, Regan let McFarlane know he wasn't happy, couching his displeasure in terms of preferring collegiality to an adversarial relationship. The president discusses a lot of things with me pri-

vately, Regan told McFarlane, and the way to get something accomplished is to make me an ally. Aides say McFarlane was initially annoyed at the implication that he was playing power politics; indeed, McFarlane's self-effacing tendencies are so well documented that if he were trying to put a move on Regan he must have secretly undergone a personality transplant during the second-term transition.

Inevitably, according to aides, McFarlane also drew another conclusion: the chief of staff was questioning his integrity, and after another of these Dutch-uncle sessions last spring McFarlane blew his stack. The Vesuvian shouting match that ensued still prompts cringes from those near the epicenter. "Goddammit," McFarlane roared, "if you want my resignation I'll give it to you." "Who the Christ wants your resignation?" Regan thundered back. "Slow down."

Regan's I-am-in-charge impulses and his extraordinary compulsion about being kept informed collided with McFarlane's tendency to worry about substance more than process. "Let's face it," says one source whose sympathies lie with McFarlane, "Bud is the quintessential team player. He wasn't playing games. But he's not the world's best manager. He's a very substantive guy who presumes management will take care of itself. And this was a case where Bud's inattention to certain management details was misread as purposeful exclusion directed at Regan."

Since the Santa Barbara lunch, the two advisers have halted their dueling. Both camps point to the successful resolution of the South African sanctions flap as proof that McFarlane and Regan compromised—McFarlane to retain leverage with the South Africans, Regan to avoid stinging defeat at the start of an intensive fall season on Capitol Hill. "They couldn't have interacted any more smoothly," says a Regan adviser.

What could have been a nasty turf spat over Soviet-American summit planning has been averted with some artful compromise. Regan and McFarlane cochair the interagency task force preparing Reagan for Geneva. It's a Solomonic arrangement that satisfies both men—McFarlane essentially has the lead but Regan has asserted his insistence at being involved in the process.

But with Geneva less than two months away, some senior Reagan advisers aren't satisfied that months of acrimony have dissipated. One of these aides contends significant damage has already occurred vis-à-vis the summit. By distracting the principals from the pre-summit maneuvering, this aide argues that the family feud has already allowed the Soviets to gain the upper hand. Nevertheless, the fact that "two tough sled dogs," as one top aide calls Regan and McFarlane, are even momentarily together in the harness is considered no small accomplishment.

THOMAS M. DEFRAK

Thomas M. DeFrank covers the White House for *Newsweek*.

The irony of counterterrorism.

TERROR ERROR

WHAT EXACTLY is terrorism? Administration officials such as Secretary of State George Shultz view it as a malignant strain of geopolitical AIDS, eroding the immune system of the international body politic, inducing confusion and paralysis. In the State Department's official definition, it is "the threat or use of violence for political purposes by individuals or groups whether acting for or in opposition to established governmental authority when such actions are intended to shock, stun, or intimidate a target group wider than the immediate victims." Whatever else, terrorism is violence against innocent non-combatants. Elaborating on such definitions has become one of the thriving cottage industries of academe.

In late July 1984 the elite, U.S.-trained Atlacatl Battalion of the El Salvador army swept through the village of Los Llanitos in the northern mountains of El Salvador. The soldiers smashed the roofs of houses, cut down corn, and then spread out through the surrounding countryside to track down the villagers who had fled. Antonio Lobo was hiding in a ravine with his family and others. "The army descended by the river and got to about five meters from us," he told Tutela Legal, the human rights agency of the Salvadoran Catholic Church. "They did not give us any warning and just shot at us." About 80 civilians were killed in similar incidents around Los Llanitos during the next few days.

In a bizarre development, those who initiated the Los Llanitos massacre may soon receive U.S. funding—in the name of fighting terrorism. A State Department memorandum recently leaked to *The Washington Post* outlines a plan to provide \$27 million in military support and \$26 million in police training funds to El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, and Panama. The money will go to buy everything from X-ray equipment to Bell 212 helicopters and M-16 rifles. Drafted shortly after the June 19 terrorist attack on a San Salvador café that left four Marines dead, the proposal reflects the administration's determination to fight the "terrorist threat" worldwide. And, by the logic of the State Department, this requires shipping weapons to the raiders of Los Llanitos (and their counterparts in Guatemala). What matters to the administration is less the nature of the terrorist act than the political views of its perpetrators.

The U.S. has been training other countries' security forces in antiterrorist operations for 18 months under the Anti-Terrorism Assistance Program. But the State Department's new proposal allocates for Central America alone over five times the 1985 budget for antiterrorist training worldwide. And as well as seminars, the new program would provide arms and advanced security equipment. The \$22 million earmarked for El Salvador will presumably add to the \$483 million in economic and military assistance

already requested by the administration and authorized in the foreign aid bill. Because of Guatemala's history of army brutality, the administration has been unable to persuade Congress to authorize more than the most meager military aid to that country. Counterterrorism is a politically irresistible pretext to reopen the flow of arms.

AID TO GUATEMALA, the memo says, is needed to "reiterate our support of that government's decision to go forward with elections" this November. Yet the Guatemalan government has made no request for U.S. military aid this year and, according to the Guatemalan Embassy in Washington, does not intend to. The army's heavy hand is already felt guiding the election process, endorsing a candidate, and defining the narrow limits of debate. Last March Guatemala's head of state, General Humberto Mejia Victores, declared that the country's only human rights agency, the Mutual Support Group for the Families of the Disappeared, was infiltrated by "subversives." Just a few days later, four armed men kidnapped one of the group's leaders, beat him to death, and cut out his tongue. Another of the group's leaders was found murdered at the bottom of a ravine along with her three-year-old son and younger brother. Overwhelming evidence exists that the army has indiscriminately murdered Indian peasants in rural areas. No member of the armed forces has ever been detained, much less tried or convicted, for such offenses.

In these circumstances, more military aid will hardly strengthen the hand of those committed to the democratic process and a return to civilian rule. And there's little sign that Guatemala's military leaders intend to change their ways. General Mejia Victores persistently denies any army involvement in human rights abuses. Guatemala should not be singled out for criticism, he told a press conference last July. "It seems there is also terrorism in the whole world."

In El Salvador incidents such as the Los Llanitos massacre are the outgrowth of official policy. In order to deny guerrilla forces food and support, peasants in certain areas are driven from their homes with grenades and rifles. In Chalatenango province, Colonel Sigifredo Ochoa has established 12 "free-fire" zones. "In these zones there are no civilians," Colonel Ochoa told Chris Hedges of *The Dallas Morning News*. "There are only concentrations of guerrillas, so we keep these areas under heavy fire." In fact, according to relief officials Hedges interviewed, these areas are populated by civilians.

The Guatemalan government's indiscriminate attacks against unarmed Indian peasants also constitute terror. And an admirably succinct definition of terrorism—"Selective Use of Violence for Propagandistic Effects"—appears as a chapter heading in the manual drafted by the CIA for the Nicaraguan *contras*' instruction. If it were serious about its own definition, the State Department would have to include Nicaragua among the recipients of counterterrorism aid. Clearly the administration's position is not entirely ingenuous.

Whatever they may say, administration officials do not consider each act of terror around the world an equal offense to the American way of life. Only those judged to threaten U.S. interests meet with a firm response. The real danger, according to President Reagan, is "terrorism that is part of a pattern, the work of a confederation of terrorist states" whose "goal is to expel America from the world." And in Central America the focal point of this anti-American alliance, in Reagan's view, is Nicaragua.

For a government to ignore its country's geopolitical interests would be a dereliction of duty. But the strategic perspective can be misleadingly seductive. One danger to El Salvador's democracy, according to the State Department's memo, is "leftist-instigated labor and student unrest." In fact, union discontent frequently originates in labor groups that supported Salvadoran president José Napoleón Duarte. For the most part, their demands are neither revolutionary nor antidemocratic, and they pose no threat to U.S. interests. Besides pressing for wage increases to keep up with the cost of living, most want Duarte to fulfill his campaign promises to prosecute political assassins and continue the dialogue with the guerrillas.

The foolishness of responding to labor protest with counterterrorist SWAT teams was amply demonstrated in June. A special unit of the Salvadoran treasury police, trained by the U.S., stormed a hospital in San Salvador to break a month-long strike. Shortly before dawn, over 100 troops occupied the building, streaming in through the basement and from a helicopter on the roof. Patients and medical staff were forced to lie down with their hands tied behind their backs. In the confusion four undercover police officers were killed by the troops.

THE counterterrorism proposal is particularly disquieting in view of certain attitudes in the State Department. In recent years senior officials have tried to discredit human rights reporting groups who don't share the administration's selective definition of terrorism. On ABC's "Nightline" last February, former secretary of state for human rights Elliott Abrams flatly denied that the Los Llanitos massacre ever happened: "I'm telling you that there were no significant—there were no massacres in El Salvador in 1984." Not only did *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, and *The Miami Herald* confirm that the massacre took place, even the Salvadoran government's own Human Rights Commission admitted that 80 civilians were killed there "out of combat." State Department officials who investigated the case say that, although there were casualties at Los Llanitos, there was no evidence to indicate a massacre and much evidence to indicate that the guerrillas stage-managed the incident.

Abrams's denials were part of a larger campaign to discredit anyone who suggests that U.S.-backed military forces in the region have committed abuses that qualify as terrorism. In September 1982 Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Thomas Enders (whose job Abrams now holds) circulated a letter attacking an Amnesty International report on human rights violations in Gua-

temala. Embassy information, Enders declared, “frequently contrasts sharply with that provided by Amnesty International.” This was something of an overstatement: in three of the seven cases Enders cited there was no significant difference between the embassy’s and Amnesty’s accounts. In the other four cases Amnesty relied on a more stringent standard of evidence than the embassy.

Enders, who allowed the letter to be distributed to the Guatemalan press, had worked on Central American policy long enough to know that such public criticism might be taken by the military as permission to attack the offending organization. Enders’s actions, according to a report by the Americas Watch Committee, “contributed to circumstances in which, if Amnesty wished to send a mission to that country, the mission’s members—and its sources—would not be safe.”

Similarly, the administration has also attempted to discredit Tutela Legal by disputing its connection to the Salvadoran Catholic Church. This puts it strangely at odds with Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas, who has issued a statement calling Tutela Legal an “important and close part” of his ministry.

To base Central American policy on strategic interests of the U.S. as well as human rights is only reasonable. But the question of strategy should not be smuggled through Congress behind a screen of metal detectors. By packaging military aid as counterterrorism, the administration hopes to deliver aid Congress might otherwise be reluctant to send. Few members of Congress are naïve enough to be taken in by this semantic chicanery. But most can read the political signs. Any measure termed “antiterrorism” is bound to draw a flurry of supportive constituent letters. The bill, which will emerge later this fall, is considered likely to pass with only minor “damage limitation” amendments. “It’ll really fly,” laments one congressional aide.

DANIEL TREISMAN

Daniel Treisman is a former TNR reporter-researcher.

The return of the Gilded Age.

BARBECUE TIME

WHEN TED, the Terrible, Turner had the temerity to attempt a takeover at CBS, bells rang at Black Rock. To repel the invading pirates, CBS dispatched its agents to the state legislature at Albany, where they ordered up an amazing law that would have stopped Turner, even after he had bought CBS, from taking possession of the corporation. This piece of legislative craft was rushed through both houses, with no hearings, in a matter of days. Some

Wall Street elements adversely affected by the bill mounted a successful effort to get Governor Mario Cuomo to veto it. But elsewhere the sight of a large and powerful corporation walking into a state legislature and demanding that it pass a piece of indefensible special legislation went unremarked.

THE EXPERIENCE is not a new one for the boys in Albany. In the 1870s Jay Gould, one of America’s founding father robber barons, used the legislature in the same way to fend off Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt’s mad charge to wrest control of the Erie Railroad from him. For legislators too slow to understand the cogency of his arguments, Gould used money. CBS, being modern, up-to-date, and ethical, doubtless used charm. The upshot of Gould’s victory in the New York State Legislature was that he was allowed to saturate the Erie Railroad with so much watered stock the line failed to pay a dime in dividends from 1873 to 1942. Around the lower end of Manhattan the line was known for decades as “the scarlet woman of Wall Street.” What they’re going to call CBS remains to be seen.

They may not call CBS anything, for the episode is a minor one in the unfolding of a saga similar to the one Mark Twain dubbed the Great Barbecue at the beginning of the Gilded Age. The 1870s offer the best parallel to our own micro-age of stockjobbery and financial recklessness. Our period rivals the 1920s in the ascendancy of money power and in business power riding over property rights and fair market rules in a cyclonic rush to get rich using bucket-shop tactics and bunko artist ethics.

As E. F. Hutton’s guilty plea to 2,000 counts of wire fraud suggests, the public image of the honest, cautious, conservative firm is just bait for suckers. No matter how big the name or how old or how strong the aroma of old money and Congregationalist rectitude, they are not above busting the rules. For example, it has long been the rule of the New York Stock Exchange that all stocks listed on the exchange entitle their owners to one vote at the annual meeting for each share owned. General Motors’s “E” stock, which appeared on the big board a year or so ago, carries only half a vote per share. It will soon be joined by a General Motors “H,” which also will entitle its owners to only half a vote. In addition, owners of E and H shares don’t own a piece of all of GM, only certain parts of the corporation. The Stock Exchange is considering changing the rules to accommodate General Motors and the other companies that will issue these mutant securities, which strengthen management against a company’s owners and serve to confuse investors.

This is bonanza time on Wall Street. The more complicated a “financial product,” the more shot full of exceptions and special provisos you can make it, the harder it is for customers to make sensible investment decisions and the easier it is to bilk and swindle them. The best way to make sure one’s scheme is legal is to have a court promulgate it. In Delaware, where many of the nation’s largest corporations are chartered because of the state’s famously lax attitude toward regulation, a court has ruled that a

IMAGINE OUR WORLD WITHOUT THEM.



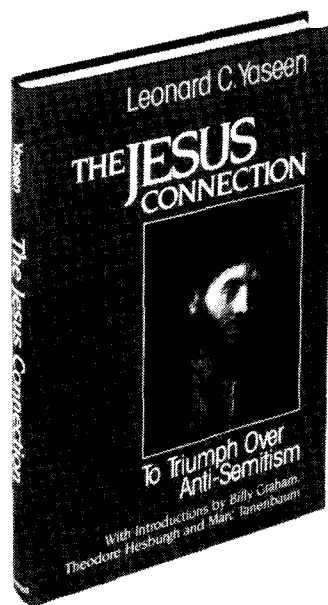
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DON'T SAY WE DIDN'T WARN YOU

THE JUNK BONDS vogue is new, but there have always been shaky debtors and gullible lenders. More than a century ago, the khedive of Egypt was borrowing not wisely but too well in London. In the 1880s Argentina went broke, dragging along the illustrious banking house of Baring Brothers. In the 1890s American railroad bond prices collapsed. In the 1920s shiploads of bonds arrived in this country from foreign governments and municipalities. A fifth of them were in default by 1932.

But the current infatuation with "junk bonds"—that is, debt securities graded specifically as a speculative investment—has one novel feature. The novelty is the stunning forthrightness of the late 20th-century corporate borrower. In the last century, when the khedive, for example, was wheedling gold out of Lombard Street, the Egyptian ministers saw no reason to caution the British against imprudent risk-taking. (That was left to Walter Bagehot, who sounded the alarm in *The Economist*.) In the United States at the turn of the century, there were demands for better financial disclosure, and the New York Stock Exchange made pioneering advances to help satisfy them. But it was not until the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 that investment bankers and their clients were put on legal notice to divulge each and every significant investment fact, good and bad.

The contemporary prospectus has elevated reverse salesmanship to a kind of art form. There would be a nobility about the self-effacing honesty of corporate debtors, perhaps, if it weren't for the purely defensive motives of their bankers and lawyers: they do not want to get sued.

The open style in prospectus draftsmanship has reached an apex with the current crop of junk bond offerings. This is an odd thing on its face. The investor from Mars, not having heard about Drexel Burnham Lambert Inc. (which wrote, edited, and published the book on junk

bonds), might wonder how shocking a bond prospectus could possibly be. After all, a bond is an intrinsically conservative investment, one that sets up modest expectations with both the buyer and seller. The very best the buyer can hope for is the return of his money, on time, with interest. That may be a satisfactory investment bargain for him, but it is a far cry from a ground-floor equity position in the next IBM. In view of the limited appreciation potential in bonds, even in junk bonds, why would a sane person risk an infinite depreciation?

One answer is the current received opinion that a good analyst can distinguish between real financial risk and prospectus boilerplate. So, the argument goes, when Metromedia Broadcasting Co. states baldly (as it did last fall) that it will be unable to meet the interest payments, let alone return the principal, on its bonds unless, at some future date, it sells some assets or otherwise improves its lot, there's no need to worry. The Metromedia prospectus said just that in almost those words: "Based on current levels of operations and anticipated growth, the Company does not expect to be able to generate sufficient flow to make all the principal payments due on the Serial Senior Notes . . . without taking action to refinance a portion of its indebtedness."

Many junk bond buyers are professional investors. They say that the hue and cry against junk is the keening of ignoramuses and jealous competitors. (And so far, at least, Metromedia has contrived to make the payments.)

The truth is that not even the most lurid confessional language in these prospectuses shocks many people. A friend of mine, a seasoned analyst of this stuff, recently sent me the particulars on a new issue of ten-year notes from Woodward & Lothrop Inc., the Washington department store company. Before its acquisition last year by A. Alfred Taubman, the successful real estate developer, Woodies had relatively little debt. Now it has lots, and it expects to take on still more. My friend, citing the company's stellar operating record and its excellent management, said that the note holders have nothing to worry

about. Yet I can't help thinking that they have plenty to worry about, and I should think that anyone who can read plain English would think so, too. To quote from page three of the prospectus:

An investment in the Notes involves certain risks which prospective investors should carefully consider. These risks include (1) the highly leveraged financial condition of the Company; (2) the insufficiency of the Company's earnings to cover fixed charges; (3) that the Notes will be subordinated and unsecured and will not be entitled to the benefit of any guarantees, unlike most of the Company's existing senior indebtedness; (4) the Company's seasonal requirements for cash in excess of cash provided by operations to service its indebtedness, to finance seasonal increases in working capital and for capital expenditures, and the possible inability to finance such requirements. . . .

But if investors read that, they evidently didn't believe it. The notes, which were underwritten by Salomon Brothers Inc., sold briskly at a yield of about 15 percent. And since they were sold in minimum denominations of \$250,000, it cannot be said that they were forced upon subdebutantes.

At a meeting of the Investment Bankers Association in October 1932, there was some discussion about reforms to prevent the recurrence of another worldwide debt catastrophe. The *New York Times's* account of the bankers' meeting included this ironic observation: "It was freely predicted that in the future both the bankers and the investors would stress more strongly the questions of the credit behind each issue, and that the investors would demand more detailed financial statements."

The story said nothing about the investors actually reading the statements or, if they did, about believing them. Probably, in that humbled time, any such caveats would have seemed unnecessary.

JAMES GRANT

James Grant is the editor of *Grant's Interest Rate Observer*. He is the author of *Bernard M. Baruch: The Adventures of a Wall Street Legend* (Simon & Schuster).

company, when buying back its own shares, can choose which among its stockholders it will buy from. The price of buy-backs is always above the price of the same shares on the open market, so they are, or were before this decision, thought to be a form of dividend to be distributed pro rata among all the owners. Under this ruling some owners can be left out in the cold and some can be made very rich by the board of directors.

The directors of the J. M. Smucker Co. ("With a name like that it has to taste good") have come up with another way to stamp question marks on the value and meaning of its stock. The board is guiding through a rules change to its corporate charter that would give ten votes to every share owned by the same person for four years or more. Stock owned for under four years would only be entitled to one. The American Family Corporation (insurance and broadcasting) instituted the same kind of rule earlier this year.

VOTES OR no votes, investors had best scrutinize the balance sheets of the companies they're thinking about buying shares of to make sure there's a there there. There is a hot new game on Wall Street called "securitization," meaning that companies are taking part of their revenue-producing assets, borrowing money by issuing a quasi-bond on them, and pledging the assets' income to pay back the loan. The Sperry Corporation recently raised almost \$200 million doing that, using the income from leases on its computers to pay back people who bought these newfangled securities. United Airlines is "securitizing" part of its hotel chain.

Any part of a business that has money coming in can be treated this way, which means companies can be sucked dry of every dollar-producing asset while still looking like the same old, dependable corporation to people who don't read the fine print. As to what happens to owners of these securitized pieces of paper or the bondholders or stockholders when we hit the next recession and there isn't enough cash to go around, well, see ya in court, old buddy.

There are also the "junk bonds," the late 20th century's equivalent of the 19th century's watered stock. Whereas the earlier sharpies issued ten million dollars' worth of stock for a company with only a million dollars' worth of assets, today's buckaroos are in effect selling bonds that must be paid off at the rate of a million dollars a year by a company pulling in only \$900,000. To make up that last 100 grand, companies watered with junk bonds typically slash the salaries of their employees, fire the research and development department, and forgo maintenance or the purchase of new equipment. Such expedients keep them going while the boom is on, but when the bust comes, well, see ya in court again, old buddy.

Some junk bonds are bought by naïfs who have read the academic studies certifying them as safe. Others, it is suspected, are bought by insurance companies that have written more policies than they have money to back up and must have the higher interest rates junk bonds pay. Yes, another Gilded Age phenomenon is back with us: the

insurance company that can't pay. Nearly 100,000 customers who paid three billion dollars for annuities from two insolvent Baldwin-United companies can tell you what fun this is. As of the end of last year, 1,100 insurance companies were in perilous shape.

NO INDUSTRY, of course, is more heedless of rules, laws, or common sense in the pursuit of gain than the banking industry. The stereotype of the humdrum, clubbable gentleman banker, with the gold watch chain swathed between the pockets of his waistcoat, hasn't been seen around the counting houses in some years now. He was a product of the era (circa 1934-1975) of close government regulation and scrutiny; before that American bankers were specialists in plunging and reckless risk-taking. Today's bankers are behaving in much the same way. With losses large enough to turn your lips blue, they have resorted to cooking the books and thinking up yet new schemes of high risk and dubious ethics to save themselves. "Untold billions of dollars worth of uncollectible loans to countries are still carried on banks' books as assets," *Forbes* recently pointed out. "Manufacturers Hanover, to name one, has \$3.7 billion—112 percent of its net worth—tied up in loans to Brazil and Argentina. Chase Manhattan also has \$3.6 billion—92 percent of its net worth—in loans to the same two countries."

The collapse of Chicago's international money center bank, Continental Illinois, and its takeover by the government, is not a unique deviation in an otherwise safe and sane system. The Bank of America, formerly the largest bank in the United States but now shrunk to number two status on account of its self-inflicted wounds, has, under pressure from government auditors to keep its books more, ahem, shall we say carefully, announced a loss of more than \$300 million last quarter. But if the struggle to make the banks' quarterly reports and annual statements reflect their true financial condition is indeed being attempted, it is a thankless one. Fear that candor might reveal a situation so startling it could precipitate a crisis is making the regulatory authorities understandably cautious about enforcing the rules.

As for the bankers, they think laws are there for the breaking as, à la Big Jim Fisk and J. Pierpont Morgan, they send out lawyers in their \$800 Oxxford suits to get them into interstate banking, stockbroking, real estate, and other activities once forbidden them by laws that have never been repealed.

Like losing gamblers, the banks keep coming up with new, ethically questionable schemes to cover their losses at the bookmaker's. The First National Bank of Boston was fined half a million dollars for failing to report more than a billion dollars' worth of cash transactions. The reporting requirements have been instituted to stop dope peddlers and other racketeers from escaping detection by laundering their money. It has not been proved that the Bank of Boston was taking fees to service organized crime, although the revelations have caused some people to hold their noses when the bank's name is mentioned. Before it

could be mentioned too often, however, it developed that two score other banks, including Chase Manhattan, Manufacturers Hanover, and the Bank of America, were doing similar things.

Another of the banks' new inventions is "note issuance facilities," or NIFs. NIFs are NIFTy. A NIF is a promise by a bank, in exchange for a fee, to lend money to a company at any time over a specific number of years if the company's credit ratings so deteriorate during that period of time that it is unable to borrow from anyone else. This is nothing more than a contractual promise to make a bad loan.

NIFs are not carried on the banks' books as contingent liabilities. They are part of a category of activities called—tra-la!—"off balance sheet obligations." These obligations come in a myriad of forms—obfuscation and obscurantism being an essential part of this sleight-of-hand operation. In addition to NIFs, there are standby letters of credit, foreign money purchase agreements, every sort of arcana. We're just learning about the intoxicating world of off balance sheet obligations.

Intoxicating isn't too strong a word for it, either. As of the end of 1984, the 15 biggest banks in America had, in their pursuit of coin, signed themselves up for no less than

a trillion dollars in contingent liabilities—that is, promises to pay somebody or other money under one set of conditions or another. Of course these institutions don't have a trillion dollars, so they have to hope that all these contingent liabilities don't become actual obligations.

Ah, the great barbecue, can't you smell the meat cookin'? Bring Diamond Jim Brady back from the Gilded Age, and he would be appalled at *la cuisine minceur* and all the jiggling and jogging rich people do now, but he'd feel as much at home at Lutèce as at Delmonico's. The consumption at Southampton, Martha's Vineyard, and Palm Springs is suitably conspicuous, and in the 1980s, as opposed to a hundred years before, there are no Mugwumps, no Mark Twains, no Carl Schurz, no Horace Greeleys to cry for reform.

Order another three dozen oysters, Jim. The other day two men pleaded guilty of paying kickbacks for rags and old clothes to officers of the Salvation Army.

NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN

Nicholas von Hoffman writes regularly on almost everything.

The curious history of the next speaker of the House.

THE WRIGHT STUFF

BY PAUL WEST

IT WAS BIG NEWS this summer when Majority Leader Jim Wright threatened to punch a Republican right-winger during a squabble on the House floor over a procedural vote. But the incident was right in character for the hot-tempered Texan. Over the years he's made similar threats with some regularity. In fact, Wright's political career didn't really start rolling until he'd proved his manhood by decking a drunk who called him a "Commie sonofabitch" at the local American Legion hall in 1946.

As that career has taken him from small-time west Texas pol to national leader, he's altered his political stance, his career goals, his personal life—even his looks. He's made money and gained political power. But at heart Wright remains a deal-making, big-spending Texas pol—hair trigger and all, as the incident on the House floor shows. Not a few of his colleagues wonder

whether the last of the old-time Democrats is the right future leader for the House and for the Democratic Party. For the next speaker is likely to be the preeminent spokesman for the party at least until 1988 and perhaps far beyond.

Wright, who is now neither as liberal as his Fort Worth constituents perceive him nor as conservative as much of Washington thinks, began political life as a certified lefty. As a member of the Texas Legislature in the late 1940s, he was part of a small band of Democrats whose liberal leanings won them the derisive label "the Russian Embassy." Wright's main contribution was a quixotic attempt to tax the state's biggest oil, gas, and sulphur producers; the proceeds were to go for teacher pay, farm roads, and aid to the poor, elderly, and blind.

When his job was on the line, however, Wright retreated. Three weeks before election day in 1948, one of his opponents was shot by unknown assailants. The dying man fingered "communists" and, by implication, Wright (the murder remains unsolved, and authorities never

Paul West is national political correspondent of *The Baltimore Sun*.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

found credible evidence to connect Wright or his supporters to the crime). Facing defeat, Wright made a desperate election-eve appeal. "I believe in the soundness of States' Rights," he wrote in the local paper. "I believe in the Southern tradition of Segregation and have strongly resisted any and all efforts to destroy it." He lost anyway.

After that, Wright became almost obsessively cautious. "He's not one for tilting at windmills," remarked former Texas congressman Frank Ikard, who has known Wright for 30 years. "I cannot recall him ever being out alone or way out front on anything."

To restore his reputation, Wright put in two terms as mayor of tiny Weatherford, Texas (population 8,000). A longtime associate, Craig Raupe, recalls Wright's anguish over racial questions in his new job. During a prolonged drought in 1953, Wright watched uneasily as black children peered enviously through the fence of the municipal pool while their white friends swam. Segregation was still the law in Texas, but Raupe, who ran the pool, told the mayor that if any black kids wanted in, he'd let them. "O.K., I'll back you," Wright replied. "But let's hope they don't ask." Raupe says, "We were both yellow. We both knew what was right, but it was political suicide."

Two years later Wright arrived in Congress as something of a hero. He had removed a burr under Speaker Sam Rayburn's saddle by defeating a reactionary Democratic incumbent, a prefigurative Boll Weevil. Eager to please his elders in the Texas delegation, Wright took a

seat on the Public Works Committee, and spent the next 22 years there. Had he not been chosen majority leader of the House in 1977, he would have become committee chairman that year.

As a product of the fast-disappearing one-party South, Wright had no party organization to rely on. Political survival meant creating his own machine. Like LBJ and others before him, he chose a traditional route: the pork barrel. Applying himself to the task with single-minded zeal, he became a legend for funneling federal dollars to his hometown. A 1979 study found that his district got the highest "return" per tax dollar of any in the country.

Then, as now, Wright was a classic national Democrat from Texas: liberal on economics with a deep neo-populist streak (cheap money) and conservative on social and foreign policy issues. But on the two critical issues of his time, civil rights and Vietnam, he lagged behind others in his party and his home state. Though he wasn't a demagogue on race, when the landmark 1964 Civil Rights Act reached the House floor, Wright voted no. It wasn't until the 1970s, when he became majority leader, that he emerged as a steady adherent of civil rights initiatives.

A war supporter virtually until the end, Wright sponsored a controversial White House-approved resolution in 1969 endorsing Richard Nixon's Vietnam policy. As late as 1973, when a majority in Congress voted to end the bombing in Indochina, Wright sided with those who would let it continue. Throughout, he took a traditional line: that Con-

gress had a bipartisan duty to support administration foreign policy. It was also in Wright's political interest. His district is full of big defense contractors that supplied fighter bombers and helicopters to the war effort.

For most of his House career, Wright was best known as a tireless advocate of federal water projects. His meatiest pork chop was the Trinity River canal, a mammoth \$860 million plan to bring barge traffic from the Gulf of Mexico to landlocked Fort Worth. In 1965 Wright single-handedly convinced Congress to authorize the project, despite the opposition of home-state president Lyndon Johnson. It was the kind of prodigious feat that won Wright the lasting admiration and financial backing of the local business community. Area voters were less enamored of the canal idea; their refusal to assume local costs led Congress to defer funding, apparently forever.

One of Wright's treasured possessions is an original copy of *My First Days in the White House*, Huey Long's 1935 manifesto for the populist revolution he didn't live to lead. Asked in an interview to explain his view of government's proper role, Wright pulled out the well-marked volume. He read aloud, at length, Long's Depression-era dream of a Western water project costing ten billion dollars. "That's more like \$100 billion today. Or more. More!" Wright marveled. Clearly the Kingfish understood Big Government's potential for greatness. "I believe we make a bigger mistake," Wright concluded, "when we think too small than when we think too big."

WRIGHT TOO dreamed big. He'd had his sights on the White House since childhood. Hoping to work his way up the ladder, he unsuccessfully sought LBJ's Senate seat in 1961 and later was refused appointment by Johnson to a Cabinet job or ambassadorship. Depressed, Wright turned inward. He seriously considered retiring from politics. He divorced his wife of 30 years and married a staff aide. Abandoning his presidential ambitions, he channeled his energy into internal House battles. In 1976, shrewdly glimpsing daylight in the three-way race among Representatives Richard Bolling, Phil Burton, and John McFall for majority leader, he entered late and was elected by a single vote. Subsequent analysis revealed he had won because he was a friendly guy, a Southerner (the other candidates weren't), and had courted his colleagues over the years by helping with their pet projects on Public Works.

As a rural congressman who didn't finish college (World War II intervened), Wright has never been the darling of Washington sophisticates. Yet he is the proud possessor of one of the most sensitive political antennae in town. Since becoming majority leader, Wright has broadened his outlook and retooled his image. He's done a good job of reflecting his national constituency in the House, carefully shifting ground on key issues such as federally funded abortion, the MX missile, and aid to the Nicaraguan *contras* to stay close to the liberal Democratic majority. He's adjusted to the demands of television, too, trading his dark-rimmed specs for aviator glasses and his plaid suits for

designer ultrasuede. He stopped dyeing his thinning hair an orange color and let it go gray. Even his trademark eyebrows don't bush so defiantly anymore. Wright credits his wife, Betty, as being "the architect" of his changed appearance.

YET IT SEEMS SAFE to say that he will never be taken for an Atari Democrat. As majority leader, he may have lifted his sights beyond the pork barrel, but he hasn't lost his affection for big spending programs. Without him, the ill-fated synthetic fuels program might never have been born. Even in the straitened Age of Reagan, he's found something new to admire. At a White House meeting earlier this year, Wright startled the president and leaders of both parties with an impromptu plug for Star Wars. Other more obscure, but similarly visionary, projects he has championed in recent years include the solar power satellite, a now-dormant plan to beam solar energy to earth via orbiting structures as big as Manhattan Island. Estimated cost: \$500 billion to one trillion dollars.

Since his rise to national prominence, Wright's personal finances have changed as well. For his first 25 years in Congress, he had little to show. Almost broke in 1976, he used \$98,501 in campaign contributions to pay off "personal and political debts," which, he said, had become "inseparably entwined." After neglecting his bankbook for years, Wright says he grew concerned during the 1970s about leaving an estate to his heirs.

About that time he met legendary Fort Worth oilman Monty Moncrief—a man who once casually dealt his golfing pals Bob Hope and Bing Crosby into some oil wells that brought them five million bucks each. Early in 1979 the oilman needed Wright's political pull. One of his companies had helped drill Israel's first commercial oil well, a gusher in occupied Egyptian waters off the Sinai coast. Then peace had broken out. At Camp David, Israel agreed to return the oil field, and Egypt laid plans to evict Moncrief's company—before it could recoup its \$100 million investment. Moncrief wanted the United States to pressure Egypt into granting relief. But for years the State Department had sided with Egypt and condemned Israel's drilling as illegal.

Though Wright and Moncrief were barely acquainted (Monty had never even voted for Wright, much less contributed to his campaigns), Wright wasn't one to spurn a constituent in need. Using his access as a House leader, he personally took up Moncrief's case with Jimmy Carter, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, and a raft of top Egyptian officials. No dice. Finally, amid the euphoria surrounding the signing of the 1979 peace treaty, he importuned Anwar Sadat, pressing a letter into his hands pleading Moncrief's side. What Wright didn't tell Sadat—or anyone else, for that matter—was that several weeks earlier Monty Moncrief had cut him into a private gas well deal in east Texas.

Gas exploration is notoriously risky, especially for someone with little money, but the deal had the appearance of a no-lose proposition. The first well, which began

to run dry, was followed by an offer from Moncrief to invest in another. Wright paid about \$50,000 in all, much of it borrowed from a Fort Worth bank. Through 1984, the wells were still producing, and had earned Wright between \$70,500 and \$222,500, according to public records. Though he hasn't invested with Moncrief again, Wright has prospered ever since. By the end of 1984, his personal holdings had grown to between \$600,000 and \$1.2 million, including oil and gas wells worth as much as \$300,000.

When the Moncrief deal came to light in 1980, Wright denied any impropriety, and defended his efforts on the oilman's behalf as no different from those he routinely provides his constituents. (His lobbying got Moncrief nowhere; but the oilman wound up making a profit anyway, thanks to fast-rising world oil prices.) At the time, Wright was facing the toughest reelection fight of his career. But his Republican opponent, backed by oil interests, was reluctant to raise the issue, and Wright won handily. He probably won't be challenged seriously again. Even local Republicans are savoring the lucrative prospect of a hometown boy as House speaker.

FREE TO CONCENTRATE on the race for speaker, Wright has waited uneasily as O'Neill hangs onto the job. Though the 62-year-old Texan has been anointed by O'Neill as his successor, and will in all likelihood step forward as speaker after O'Neill retires next year, the delay has cost him. In the new climate of generational change in the House, Wright's ascension would stand out as the final gasp of the old go-along-to-get-along crowd.

As speaker, Wright could prove to be an unusually tough and effective boss. The pugnacious former Golden Gloves fighter says he'd like to be a "forceful speaker." He has the potential for leading through intimidation. And though his temperament can get in the way, those who have felt the sting of his rage find him quick to forgive, if not to forget. "Jim is a brooder," said playwright Larry L. King, a former aide. "If things go wrong, if people are feeling badly about him, if he's been unjustly accused, he doesn't just go over to sleep. He broods and frets about it." On a personal level, his colleagues' major complaint is that Wright isn't a hail-fellow-well-met. He confides in no one and seems to have no close friends.

But the next speaker must do more than lead the House. He will inherit a high-profile "public speakership" begun under O'Neill. With Republicans in control of the White House and Senate, the speaker has become the leading voice of the Democratic opposition (making the outmoded O'Neill an ever-larger part of the Democrats' problem, in the view of some). The advent of a Jim Wright era in Congress gives heartburn to younger Democrats, who fear for their party's future and their own. In their view, having an old-line politician with more than a hint of the snake-oil salesman about him as your national spokesman is no way to win the hearts and minds of tomorrow's voters.

In that sense, Wright remains his own biggest enemy. He is renowned for his flowery orations. On the House

floor, his grandiloquence plays well; on TV, it's a disaster. Here is a vintage example from a new collection of his speeches: "In finest theory, [a politician] gathers up gleams of enlightenment from a multitude of human sources, draws them all together through the prism of his own personality, and then transmits them, concentrated, in a broader, brighter beam of inspiration for the whole community." His rhetorical flourishes are an anachronism better suited to the days of the chautauqua circuit than the solid-circuit age. "It's like Broadway versus television. Jason Robards is bad on TV because he overacts. With Wright, it's the same thing. He does more, rather than less," said a Democratic aide. "It's a situation that has to be dealt with."

Wright is trying, but some Democrats see him as a risk they cannot afford. That feeling became clear last fall when Republican gains seemed to jeopardize future Democratic control of the House. In a series of secret meetings, junior Democrats mulled some sort of leadership coup. O'Neill and Wright handily co-opted the rebels, and the threat faded. But a weak Democratic showing in the 1986 congressional elections could revive the smoldering revolt and shake Wright's claim to the speakership.

So for the next year he'll continue to press what amounts to the longest-running and most expensive campaign on the national political scene. Working his colleagues like a ward heeler, he has appeared in hundreds of districts since 1977 and raised millions for their campaigns, much of it from his special PAC fund. His labors have brought him more than 200 pledges of support from Democratic representatives, he says, far more than needed to win. Yet one Southern congressman whom Wright counts as pledged to him says scornfully, "Those pledges aren't worth the paper they're written on. It's an easy shot. You've got a secret-ballot election. A lot of these people aren't going to say no to him. But people are just going to swallow any commitment if they think Jim is not where the party ought to go."

IF WRIGHT IS TROUBLED about the party's future, he keeps it well hidden. He regards recent Republican gains as little more than the natural swing of the political cycle. When the economic balloon bursts, voters will return to the Democratic fold. "I think for the most part our party has been on the right track, but that doesn't mean that we should get in a rut," he says. "I think that's leadership. That's what we're trying to do, moving with events, staying ahead of events, not just bogged down in the settled, hidebound, and self-satisfied position of the French behind the Maginot Line."

Nor does he worry much about his image. "Without substance, image is empty," he says. "I think reality is more important than perception, and without having a grip on reality, flighty perceptions can be dangerous to the nation. Therefore, I want to concentrate first on substance and reality. And I want to be able to express that substance and reality with sufficient fidelity that the image gained will be the true image, not the phony image." Indeed. □

STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Hell and Other Matters

Martin Scorsese is one of the few American directors to rise since World War Two who have strongly individual styles. *Mean Streets*, *Taxi Driver*, *Raging Bull*, and *King of Comedy*, whatever their merits, whatever their differences from one another, are recognizably the work of the same man. Visually they share a satanic, scurrying view of the world, a

After Hours
(Warner Bros.)

James Joyce's Women
(Universal)

sense of temerity and fright at daring to be present, and they compensate for this fright with aggression. Thematically Scorsese chooses or writes or adapts material that implies a theological view of life on earth as trial, a way station for purgatory, if not for hell. Even when the stories of his films don't convey these matters directly, their atmosphere does.

So it's odd that Scorsese chose to film a script called *After Hours* by a newcomer named Joseph Minion. This is the story of one night in the life of a New York computer programmer, a young man moderately successful, apparently one of the singles for whom singles bars were invented. Through a chance encounter with a neurotic young woman in a late-night coffee shop, he gets her telephone number and calls her a bit later that night. She invites him down from his Upper East Side apartment to a Soho loft she shares with a woman, a sculptor who makes life-size figures à la George Segal. There the fun and the non-fun begin. One event leads to another with a causality that becomes apparent only afterward. Every character he meets has his or her surprises; almost every event is reprised later in an altered key. Much of the second half of the film is concerned with the hero's frustrated efforts to go home and get some sleep. The film ends in the morning with the hero accidentally dropping

off the back end of a burglar's van right in front of his office building.

Now this sounds like a lightly strung series of events, reaching from midnight to morn, touched with humor and cuteness and wryness, that, allowing for changes of detail, might have made a comedy for René Clair. We start from an orderly fixed point, then follow the hero through a world of disorder that writhes and bubbles under his routine world—routine work, routine dates—then we end up back in the world of order as if we had crossed from solid cliff to solid cliff on a wildly swinging, constantly fraying rope. Not enough for Scorsese. Especially when he has chosen as his cinematographer Michael Ballhaus, who shot many of Fassbinder's films.

After Hours becomes a journey through a threatening hell, a hell that lurks under the society of the button-down collar, even the neatly unbuttoned collar. Drugs, paranoia, crime, a discotheque crammed with screaming Mohawks, a lonely bar whose only other occupants are two burly mustached gays deeply kissing each other as if to emphasize loneliness, a series of aches and explosions under the blanket of conventionality—these are what Scorsese finds. Humor continually dabs the narrative: a cocktail waitress scrawls a note for help on the check she gives the hero; in a subway station where the hero tries to get home with the 97 cents left in his pocket, he learns that the fare went up to \$1.50 at midnight; through a window he glimpses a couple madly copulating. But mostly the camera is framing people close up at off-center angles, or is dolly-ing swiftly across the dark empty streets at pavement level with steam hissing from the manholes. Those empty streets fill suddenly with mobs hunting burglars; complete silence and titanic noise sharply abut; and the hero's one other glimpse into a window shows a woman pumping bullets into a man.

Scorsese deals with all of this very se-

curely, very personally. But his personal qualities themselves fight the material. A woman seeking vengeance chases the hero through the night streets of Soho in her Mr. Softee ice-cream truck. A farcical idea, but in Scorsese's hands, she might as well be driving a Sherman tank. Most of the time we know that the story, the cumulations, could be funny; and most of the time we see Scorsese using his exceptional skills on the material to prove it horrible. All that happens at the finish is that the hero gets safely home. That would have been enough if what had happened up to then had been handled by a Clair—or by a Billy Wilder or Blake Edwards. But Scorsese has insisted on a descent into Hades, and the pop-up arbitrary finish isn't enough; it reflects backward on the disjuncture all through the film between substance and style. And that disjuncture leaves us more baffled than rewarded.

Griffin Dunne, recently in the sordidly neglected *Almost You*, plays the hero quite competently, if not overwhelmingly. Rosanna Arquette, as the neurotic who initiates this Walpurgisnacht, is somewhat more bearable than usual. Linda Fiorentino is amusingly cool as

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Back to the Future. Amiable comedy about a teenager who is whisked back 30 years by time machine, finds himself entangled in his parents' high school romance, and has troubles getting back to the present. Good fun. (Reviewed 8/5/85)

Dim Sum. Chinese-Americans in and around San Francisco. Familiar domestic troubles brought home by enchanting people. (8/26/85)

The Shooting Party. England, 1913. Symbolism about the coming war is too pat, but every aspect of the filmmaking is exceptional. (6/17/85)

Wetherby. England today. Serious conception, intelligent dialogue, superior acting, especially Vanessa Redgrave's in the leading role. But the theme—contemporary moral blankness—is not lucidly dramatized. (8/12&19/85)

SK

the physically casual sculptor. Teri Garr gives her open-24-hours service as a purveyor of pathetic bravery.

Eleven years ago an Irish actress named Fionnula Flanagan played Molly Bloom in the Broadway production of *Ulysses in Nighttown* starring Zero Mostel. Principally she did a condensed version of Molly's closing soliloquy, which was stitched into the Nighttown section, and she was excellent. Since then, with Burgess Meredith, Flanagan has fashioned a one-woman show called *James Joyce's Women*, which she has played in many places. Now it has been expanded and filmed, with Flanagan of course playing all the important women, centrally Nora, Joyce's widow, giving an interview in 1951. She does all the roles well, but the whole is simply a display of an actress's versatility, not a film with a real need to exist. The exception is that long soliloquy, which is worth the whole picture. I can't do better than quote what I wrote earlier (TNR, April 6, 1974):

When you see Flanagan sit naked on a chamber pot in the middle of a big stage in a big theater, then loll around on a bed

fondling herself, and when you consider that very soon after this display begins Flanagan convinces you that you are peeping and eavesdropping on *privacy*, then you know that you are dealing with a genuine actress who has exceptional powers of concentration and imagination and a full range of techniques to express them.

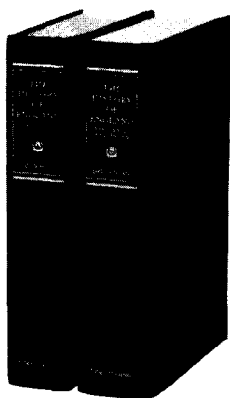
This September the Museum of Modern Art in New York presented a tribute to Alice Guy-Blaché, cosponsored by the Women's Independent Film Exchange—a two-hour program of her work. Guy-Blaché's name is known to relatively few, which is a surprise and a pity in light of the facts. Born in France in 1873, she became a secretary in the Gaumont film company in 1896 and two years later began to direct for them. In 1907, when her husband, Herbert Blaché, came to America as a Gaumont representative, she accompanied him. In 1910 they established their own film company, with studios in the then-important film center of Fort Lee, New Jersey. As she had done at Gaumont, Guy-Blaché produced several hundred films (most of them in one reel) and directed many of them. In time she also

directed for some other American companies. In 1922 she divorced Blaché and returned to France, where, for reasons as yet unknown, she was never able to find work again. In 1964 she came back to America to live with her daughter in Mahwah, New Jersey, where she died in 1968.

I saw four of her short films in the museum's program—my first view of Guy-Blaché's work. I'm unable to say that a startling talent has long been overlooked, but she was certainly well up to the level of her contemporaries. She had wit, a sense of pace, a good eye for casting, and she did some experimenting. (One of the films uses a split screen with two people on the telephone and a view of the landscape between them.)

But in the historical view, the quality of her work is not the prime point. She may or may not have been the very first maker of fiction film, as some have contended; but no one has yet disproved that she was the first woman director. And her oddly, sadly truncated career only makes her claim on our memory more pressing. □

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ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

Droodling

In life, an unsolved murder is a matter for the police; in literature, it is a matter for critics, cryptographers, academicians, and theater people digging for Broadway gold. Since Charles Dickens expired before completing the work or revealing the murderer, the real mystery in his last novel, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, is who killed the eponymous hero—or perhaps whether he actually died. Edmund Wilson undertook to solve the riddle in an essay in *The Wound and the Bow*. Now the New York Shakespeare Festival has produced a musical in Central Park that submits the issue to audience referendum.

Because *Edwin Drood* is not a particularly distinguished piece of writing, it's hard to pump up too much critical indignation over the way the novel has been altered for the stage. Still, there have been drastic stylistic changes. Dickens's book, though melodramatic in plotting and sentimental in characterization, is serious in tone; the musical is a camp on the story, the characters, indeed the novel's very conventions. Set in a provincial turn-of-the-century music hall on the amusement pier at Greater Dorping-on-Sea, the show has been equipped with an elaborate induction that includes a preshow escape artist (gleefully announcing, "We're going to Broadway"), wandering chorines in girdles, and an ad-libbing "Chairman" of ceremonies who introduces the actors while offering spectators the companionship of his "unsalaried" female employees (contributions gratefully accepted for their "theatrical studies"). He also guides the audience, once the musical finally gets down to business, through the broken structure of the plot, down the skeleton corridors of what's left of the story.

That story, for those unfamiliar with the novel, concerns three men—John Jasper, Neville Landless, and Edwin Drood—all involved with the heroine, Rosa Bud. Rosa is nicknamed Rosebud, though in the novel Drood prefers to call her "Pussy" (those sensing affinities with *Citizen Kane* might be aware that Rosebud was Hearst's pet name for Marion Davies's *mulier pudendum*). Rosa and young Drood are engaged through parental contract, but regard each other

more as brother and sister. Jasper, a choirmaster who teaches Rosa music, loves her madly, but apparently loves opium more (during off hours he can be found in the evil den of the Princess Puffer, conjuring sexual feelings and schizoid mutations out of his long pipe). Landless also has amorous feelings for Rosa—evoking Drood's disdain. Drood's scornful treatment of Landless would appear to be sufficient motive for the lad's murder. But other people have reason to wish him dead, and a mysterious figure named Dick Datchery is later introduced whose curiosity about the murder suggests he has come to track down the killer and bring him to justice.

The background is sketched in the first act. The second act is largely devoted to voting. Declaring "it was at this point that our author laid down his pen," the Chairman then abandons all pretense of dramatic action for exercises in universal suffrage, and in what he calls "a daring and possibly dangerous democratic move," lays the whole problem before the audience. First, the company casts its ballot on whether Drood is dead (the vote is affirmative, sending the actress playing the part home muttering about "envious little shits"). Then the audience is polled on the identity of the mysterious Dick Datchery. And then, after Jasper gets the opportunity to exorcise his doppelgänger in a song, after the Princess Puffer tunelessly reveals she is Rosa's long-lost nanny, and after several actors eager for election finish their canvassing, the action stops for the big vote of the evening—the identity of the killer of Drood.

As usual, I cast a losing ballot (I voted again for Mondale), but the outcome, I'm told, changes anyway from night to night, the audience tending to elect its favorite actor for the purpose of hearing another song. This preference for entertainment at the expense of plot coherence is pretty much typical of the entire evening, and so is the impulse to elevate the audience at the expense of the author. I know that Dickens was himself essentially an entertainer, but I don't think he ever went so far as to let his readers write his books for him.

This approach augurs a whole new epoch in the composition of best sellers.

Anyhow, election night during the show I saw installed in office not Cleo Laine's Princess Puffer (the usual favorite and incumbent) but John Herrera's Neville Landless, who went into paroxysms of ecstasy over the results of the balloting. And after the audience was encouraged to cast a final vote on which of the characters should pair off in duets, the evening was concluded with a rousing production number borrowed from the finale of *A Chorus Line*.

Clearly, the New York Shakespeare Festival is looking for another winner. But although *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* is good-natured, inoffensive, energetic, and ingratiating, I don't think it's likely to become the next commercial annuity for this nonprofit institution. Everything possible has been lavished on this extravaganza, from handsome sets to sumptuous costumes to excellent acting to imaginative direction. What is missing are the minimal requirements of a good book, active lyrics, and a decent score. Rupert Holmes, responsible in all three areas, knows how to create the appearance of a hit song, largely through spirited rhythms and Gilbert and Sullivan patter techniques (not to mention the vibrant orchestrations of Michael Starobin), but his melodies are infinitely forgettable and his lyrics are flat, his rhymes forced. This is serious, since the source material is mostly used as a clothesline for the musical numbers (even the Chairman concedes that the show is a "musical—with dramatic interludes"); and if the songs don't satisfy, then one is likely to grow even more conscious that a work of literature has been debased rather than enhanced on the stage.

THE PROBLEM, I fear, is that no strong impulse is animating this musical beyond a desire to succeed, and that is why so much of the work seems derivative. The Victorian setting of the novel has turned into theatrical Victoriana, with the manufactured quaintness of mass-produced antiques; the character and atmosphere often seem borrowed from hit musicals of the past, notably *My Fair Lady*. Thus, the show depends on a recognition factor rather than the elements of surprise and originality, which is not inconsistent with organizing the material according to the audience's needs instead of from the artist's perspective.

On the positive side is the production itself—exuberant, attractive, and constantly in motion. Bob Shaw's settings (along with Lindsay W. Davis's costumes) are the most authentic elements of the evening. Sitting inside a false proscenium, the scene designs manage to maintain a music hall atmosphere while functioning as handsome painted backgrounds on their own, vaguely reminiscent of Magritte. In British sailor dress, the orchestra (under Starobin's baton) maintains a sharp attack, a bright tempo. Graciela Daniele's choreography is consistently lively, particularly during an erotic phantasmagoria in the opium den, which has nubile girls in body stockings crawling out of Jasper's bed. And Wilford Leach's direction is always controlled, always witty and imaginative.

There are no infirmities in the acting either. Howard McGillin's John Jasper, gaunt, emaciated, hollow-eyed, looking like something out of *An American Werewolf in London*, is handled with an assurance that confirms this singer-actor (following his fine work in Papp's *La Bohème* last season) as one of the strongest musical performers in the busi-

ness. Betty Buckley plays Dood as an epicene stripling with slicked-down hair, her vibrating voice reminding us just how much we miss even the one decent song she had in *Cats*. Larry Shue is a commanding Reverend Crisparkle, Cleo Laine a forceful Princess Puffer, Joe Grifasi a twinkly Bazzard, and Jerome Dempsey an inventive Durdles, even though the character as written has been virtually lifted from Stanley Holloway's *Doolittle*. As for George Rose, doubling as "Your Chairman" and Mayor Sapsea—equipped with top hat, mutton chops, and irrepressible energy—he brings such period charm, such improvisational wit to his part that he almost takes on the status of coauthor. Would that he had written the whole book!

"You stand in place of our author," says the Chairman to the audience, which is precisely what is wrong with the show. Since we are not asked to vote on the scenery, the direction, or the acting, those elements remain compelling in their artistry. The evening falters on the notion that vox populi is the voice of creative achievement, that hit musicals evolve under democratic rule.

A TALE OF ONE CITY

Common Ground: A Turbulent Decade in the Lives of Three American Families
by J. Anthony Lukas

(Knopf, 659 pp., \$19.95)

This September, for the first time in a decade, Boston's public schools opened under the control of the city's School Committee, not of a federal judge. That deceptively simple change, decided by U.S. District Judge W. Arthur Garrity Jr., marks a watershed for the city. It ends a bitter period during which court-ordered busing to achieve school desegregation tore the city apart and made Boston's name synonymous with Northern racism. Judge Garrity's quiet departure was not accompanied by the pyrotechnics that marred his writ to commence busing in 1974: the televised scenes of angry white parents hurling stones and racial epithets at black schoolchildren in South Boston. So per-

haps it is fitting that the anniversary coincides with the publication of J. Anthony Lukas's new book, *Common Ground*. It is an extraordinary chronicle of what happened to the city, and in particular to three families, during those tumultuous years from Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination in 1968 to the end of the worst of the busing crisis in 1976.

This is a big book—monumental in scope, rich in historical detail, challenging in its conclusions, and compassionate in its portraiture of the three families: the black Twymons, the Irish McGoffs, and the Yankee Divers. For some readers it may contain more about Boston than they care to know; Mr. Lukas, a former *New York Times* corre-

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spondent and Pulitzer Prize winner, spent seven years working on the book and offers a veritable Baedeker on Boston. There are long excursions into the history of the city's Catholic archdiocese, its newspaper wars, the architecture of the South End, and the structure of its philanthropic institutions. (And disappointingly, there are a nagging number of small errors; the Parkman House, for example, which Mayor Kevin H. White used as his private office, was not given to the city by the historian Francis Parkman.) No doubt a shorter book would have been easier to read. But Lukas, like a good novelist whose individual characters suggest universal truths, seems to be offering Boston's particular trauma to explain the plight of the American city.

THE HEART of *Common Ground* is the three families. At first glance the Twymons, McGoffs, and Divers might appear to share very little. The Twymons are a poor black family on welfare; the McGoffs are a proud Charlestown Irish clan who helped lead the resistance to busing; and the Divers are Wasp liberals from the suburbs who go to work for good causes in the city. But Lukas, with evenhanded sympathy and unsparing candor, tells their stories in such vivid detail that he lays bare the human quotient in each, revealing, as his title promises, the common ground that unites them. Lukas himself seems to have been surprised at what his research found. "At first, I thought I read clear moral imperatives in the geometry of their intersecting lives," he writes at the beginning of the book.

But the more time I spent with them, the harder it became to assign easy labels of guilt or virtue. The realities of urban America, when seen through the lives of actual city dwellers, proved far more complicated than I had imagined.

Rachel Twymon, the matriarch of the Twymon family, is a welfare mother whose ancestors Lukas traces back to their time as slaves in Virginia. A strong woman who has been abandoned by her husband, crippled by disease, and forced into a stunted existence in public housing projects, Rachel is sustained by her deep religious convictions, and by a belief that an integrated Boston would be a better city. But she watches with growing rage and helplessness as her 13-year-old daughter gets pregnant, two of her teenage sons turn to a life of

thievery, another son is sentenced to prison for raping a white woman teacher, and her oldest daughter, unable to deal with the racial tensions of being bused to the predominantly white Charlestown High School, drops out to live with a 39-year-old married man.

ALICE MCGOFF, the descendant of an Irish rebel hanged by the British, faces many of the troubles that beset Rachel Twymon. A hatcheck girl in the Charlestown Navy Officers Club, she too lives in a decaying, crime-ridden public housing project, and is forced to raise her brood of seven children alone after her bartender husband dies. She doesn't think blacks are any worse off than Charlestown's working-class whites. "Poor was poor, hungry was hungry" is the way Lukas sums up her feelings.

When busing begins, Alice joins Powder Keg, a militant antibusing organization. She insists she is not prejudiced against blacks, though her friends and neighbors scream "nigger, go home" at black students arriving at Charlestown High and terrorize them in school for over a year. It is just that she feels a growing sense of grievance against the outside world. In 1975, the first year of busing in Charlestown, Alice "grew progressively angrier at the power, wealth, and privilege which seemed to be arrayed against her," Lukas writes. "An unelected judge, an unresponsive senator [Ted Kennedy], and uncaring suburban liberals had joined hands to wrest from her the one thing in the world over which she still exercised some control: her family."

Finally there are the Divers from suburban Lexington. Colin Diver, a brilliant graduate of Harvard Law School, is so shaken by Reverend King's assassination that he turns down a job with a prestigious Washington law firm to take a minor post with Mayor White. To assure that his personal life matches his professional commitment, he and his wife, Joan, the director of a charitable foundation, move to the South End, the only multiracial and multi-class district in the city and a frontier for gentrification.

But the Divers are soon disillusioned too: by Mayor White's equivocation in the face of the white backlash against busing, by the disruption in the elementary school where the Divers send their son, and by an epidemic of crime

in their neighborhood. Colin finds himself in the uncomfortable position of chasing a mugger down the street and bashing him in the head with the baseball bat that won him a Little League batting title. In the end, the Divers retreat to suburban Newton.

It is Lukas's contention, which he makes obliquely but repeatedly throughout the book, that underlying all these problems was not so much racism as class antagonism. Instead of developing the point explicitly in a preface, introduction, or conclusion—Lukas eschews all three devices—he lets his characters speak for him. He quotes Robert Coles, for example, the Harvard psychologist and a critic of busing, who argued during the crisis that "the ultimate reality is the reality of class. And to talk about busing only in terms of racism is to miss the point." Working-class whites and blacks "are both competing for a very limited piece of the pie."

More poignantly, Lukas talks with a teacher at Charlestown High School, a Harvard-educated Irishman, Jerry Sullivan, who had once believed in the liberal nostrum that if only blacks could get an equal—that is, an integrated—education, their success would be assured. But busing shook his faith. Charlestown High was a terrible school, but the buses had brought blacks who were even less well-educated than Charlestown's whites. "What benefit, Jerry wondered, could possibly derive from mixing the poor with the impoverished?" When he asked students to write short autobiographies, it was often difficult to tell whether the authors were white or black.

INDEED, in purely statistical terms, busing was a disaster, making Boston's schools more segregated than ever. In 1973, before Judge Garrity's order, Boston had 94,000 students in its public schools, 57 percent of them white. By 1984 the total had fallen to 57,000 students, only 27 percent white. Almost half are now black, with the remainder Hispanic and Asian.

But trying to calibrate how much of the trouble was racial and how much was based on class means venturing onto treacherous ground, and Lukas himself provides copious evidence that race was a critical factor. As he himself writes, ethnic warfare had long been a staple of Boston politics. A century before the busing crisis, Yankees and Irish

had battled over control of the city, leaving a tangible residue of ethnic feelings that are perhaps unmatched in American cities. This was reinforced by Boston's odd geography, which makes it a city of enclaves. East Boston, across the harbor; Charlestown, across the Charles River; and South Boston, separated by the railroad tracks, formed their own insular communities, tied more to their Catholic parishes than to the city.

A decade before the first buses rolled, Lukas reports, an NAACP float in the St. Patrick's Day parade in South Boston was attacked by white teenagers who pelted it with tomatoes, eggs, beer bottles, and rocks. Several young men held up a banner reading: "Go home, nigger. Long live the spirit of independence in segregated Boston." Lukas also documents the deliberate effort of the Boston School Committee, in the years before Judge Garrity's decision, to ensure that whites and blacks ended up in separate schools. If there is a villain in the piece, it was the School Committee, headed by Louise Day Hicks, though Lukas, in keeping with his almost neutral stance, shies away from assigning the committee the blame it deserves:

BYOND this debate between racism and class, Lukas sees another major conflict in American life: the tension between the demands of equality, embedded in the Constitution, and the call of community, which he traces back to John Winthrop's vision, in founding Boston, of "a city upon a hill." In the civil rights movement we often sought, in the name of equality, to outlaw local custom, which we equated with bigotry. But in the busing crisis this created a painful choice, between racial justice and equality of educational opportunity on one side and neighborhood schools on the other. For families like the Twymons and the McGoffs these were not choices between right and wrong, but between two rights. This was Boston's tragedy.

Interspersed with Lukas's narrative of the three families in *Common Ground* are chapters examining the roles of five major players in the drama, each of whom failed to some extent: Mrs. Hicks, the School Committee chairman; Judge Garrity; Cardinal Humberto Medeiros, Boston's Portuguese-born archbishop; Thomas Winship, the liberal, energetic editor of *The Boston Globe*; and Mayor White. Here too, Lukas treads

cautiously, offering judiciously balanced appraisals. In fact, Lukas himself seems in retrospect to feel he may have been too judicious; since his book appeared, he has written several articles in which he offers stronger judgments.

Mrs. Hicks, whose slogan was "You know where I stand," is portrayed by Lukas in the book as an opportunist rather than a bigot, a judgment some will find too kind. Judge Garrity, of Irish descent himself, emerges as a shrewd former political organizer for John F. Kennedy and a conscientious jurist whose belief in the Constitution prevailed over his Kennedy pragmatism. In *Common Ground* Lukas seems to suggest that, in ordering busing the way he did, Judge Garrity erred, but he does not offer any realistic alternative. In a recent article in *The Boston Globe*, however, Lukas's view is different: "Let it be said here without equivocation . . . Arthur Garrity had no choice. . . . The city owes him its profound gratitude."

Cardinal Humberto Medeiros, Lukas finds, was paralyzed by his childhood experience in Fall River, where stronger Irish kids taunted him. When busing came, he was afraid even his lukewarm support for it might lead him to be stoned if he ventured into South Boston. So the Catholic Church, the one institution in Boston that might have made some difference, stayed on the sidelines. Still, Lukas is toughest on *The Boston Globe*, the only voice that strongly supported Judge Garrity's order. Lukas finds that the *Globe* lost touch with its "Joe Six-Pack" readers and suffered from the suburban isolation of its editors, though it won a Pulitzer Prize for its coverage of busing.

CONVERSELY, Lukas is openly sympathetic to Mayor White, who sent his own five children to private school and was too preoccupied with his presidential ambitions to exert leadership in the city's growing racial crisis. When busing came, White temporized. Without the busing disaster, White might have been the Democratic nominee in 1976 instead of Jimmy Carter. Lukas may have performed a useful service in rehabilitating White's early reputation as a bright innovator, but he barely mentions the corruption scandals that marred his effectiveness and eventually drove him from office.

Lukas provides an epilogue on what has become of each of his characters in the decade since busing began. One

wishes that he had supplied an epilogue on what has happened to Boston, since the city is the real focus of the book. Lukas ends on a very pessimistic note in 1976, but it's possible with hindsight to see that busing may have been a crucible that Boston had to endure to renew itself. While no one would claim Boston has solved its racial troubles, nothing in Lukas's book prepares the



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reader for some recent changes, such as the School Committee's decision last summer to pick a black man, Laval S. Wilson, as superintendent. The early 1980s marked the end of the sharp decline in Boston's population, which began in 1950; the numbers have even begun to grow again. Many neighborhoods in the city remain poor. But the median price of a house in Boston jumped 37 percent last year, by far the highest figure in the nation, reflecting both the prosperous economy of Massachusetts as a whole and Boston's renewed attractiveness.

Perhaps most significant was the election of Mayor Raymond L. Flynn in 1983. The son of a longshoreman and a cleaning woman who grew up in Southie, Flynn was an opponent of busing. But by nature or political instinct, Flynn was shrewd enough to see that Boston was changing, and he campaigned as a populist, the champion of the neighborhoods—all the neighborhoods. One of his first acts was to pay a large settlement to the widow of a black man who had been shot by the police, a payment Mayor White opposed. Flynn

is not flashy or articulate, but he can often be found playing basketball on playgrounds in racially mixed neighborhoods. He even has a plan to develop the heart of the black ghetto in Roxbury by moving police headquarters there, an action equivalent to transferring New York's police headquarters to the South Bronx. What he is trying to do, I think, is to bring together those ideals of equality and community that split Boston so horrendously in the 1970s.

One of the major strengths of *Common Ground* is that it shows how the New Deal Democratic coalition of liberals, blacks, and working-class whites fell apart. That is, after all, who the Divers, Twymons, and McGoffs are. Ray Flynn himself probably wouldn't appeal as a national candidate. But his actions suggest it is possible, at least in Boston, to rekindle some of Roosevelt's magic.

FOX BUTTERFIELD

Fox Butterfield is the chief of the Boston bureau of *The New York Times* and the author of *China: Alive in the Bitter Sea* (Times Books).

which the West has waged against the Soviet Union, he claims, since its inception in 1917. The "Cold War," in turn, derives from the "misperceptions" of communism by Western scholars, and from the media, which mindlessly echo them.

A MAJOR purpose of *Rethinking the Soviet Experience* is to refute the scholarship of outstanding Western specialists on the Soviet Union, among them Leonard Schapiro, Merle Fainsod, and Bertram Wolfe. Of the well-known authorities, only Isaac Deutscher, E. H. Carr, and most of all the Soviet semi-dissident historian Roy Medvedev, meet with Mr. Cohen's approval. For some unexplained reason, the Chinese Communist critics of Soviet foreign policy go unmentioned, as do Soviet liberal and conservative dissidents, for most of whom the author seems to feel undisguised contempt. (Anatoly Shcharansky is dismissed as a "Western-sponsored martyr.") Nothing is said about the criticism of Soviet policies by the Italian Communist Party.

It was once fashionable to depict Soviet Russia in a favorable light by hailing its "achievements" and warning of its "challenges." This has ceased to be acceptable since Khrushchev's Secret Speech, and the opening of the country to foreign travel. Mr. Cohen has no kind words to say for the Soviet Union as it is today, or as it has been through most of its history, that is, for the past 60 or so years. Instead of idealizing Stalinist reality, however, he idealizes a fictitious alternative in the form of Nicholas Bukharin and the New Economic Policy of the 1920s, with which Bukharin was closely identified. Had it followed Bukharin instead of Stalin, he holds, Russia would have evolved a moderate, liberal kind of socialism. It missed this opportunity because the West has never shown it the kind of understanding, or granted it the kind of security, that it required.

To make this contention stick, several propositions would have to be proved: that Stalin indeed marked a radical departure from Lenin; that Bukharin was both a viable and a desirable alternative to Stalin; that the West has always conducted a "Cold War" toward Communist Russia, thereby preventing its evolution toward a more acceptable system. Mr. Cohen does not manage to be convincing on any of these issues.

No one denies that Stalin displayed

U.S. AND THEM

Rethinking the Soviet Experience by Stephen F. Cohen

(Oxford University Press, 222 pp., \$17.95)

Sovieticus: American Perceptions and Soviet Realities by Stephen F. Cohen

(Norton, 160 pp., \$12.95)

Rethinking the Soviet Experience has a scholarly apparatus, while *Sovieticus* (a collection of articles from *The Nation*) does not, but both books raise the same questions and provide the same answers. They devote much space to history, but they are about politics, especially American policies toward the Soviet Union. It is difficult to tell whether the author first reached his political conclusions and then delved into history, or began with the study of history and was led by it to his political conclusions. Whichever the route, the results are the same: a record of the past

shaped to accommodate the needs of the present.

Mr. Cohen belongs to a minority of Western specialists on the Soviet Union who regard the Bolshevik revolution as a good thing gone wrong. The reason is Stalin, who, in his opinion, diverted communism from its true, Leninist course to establish in Russia a regime for which Mr. Cohen has no more sympathy than the most hardened hard-liner. In his view Stalin was not the natural product either of Russian history or Leninist ideology, but an aberration caused largely by the "Cold War,"

psychopathic tendencies that were missing in Lenin, at any rate in his dealings with friends and followers. But personalities aside, Stalin must be said to have carried out very faithfully Lenin's program—for the structure and operations of the party, for the nature of the national economy, and for the conduct of foreign policy.

TAKE, for example, the collectivization of agriculture—the “rural holocaust,” as Mr. Cohen calls it. The author correctly sees in forced collectivization a centerpiece of Stalinism, and its most fatal legacy. But he is entirely unpersuasive when he blames Stalin for this brutal as well as inefficient form of rural management. Lenin had always favored it; he tried to impose it on the areas under his control, but he lacked the power necessary to break peasant resistance. He stated on many occasions that Russia had to go over to collective agriculture, and that this objective required the physical liquidation of the kulaks. In August 1918 he attacked the kulaks as “bloodsuckers,” “spiders,” and “leeches,” exhorting workers to kill them without mercy. In 1928 Stalin only carried out, then, what Lenin had programmed for the country's rural population.

The same applies to the foundations of the political dictatorship. All of these foundations were either laid down or charted by Lenin: the one-party state, the prohibitions on “factionalism” within the party, summary justice and concentration camps, and so on. The antinomy “Lenin-Stalin” may be useful to such Soviet reformers as Roy Medvedev, who must promote their program in Leninist terms so as to make it more palatable to the Soviet ruling elite; but it has no warrant in the historical record, and it should not be advanced as proved in Western scholarship.

Now as for Bukharin—Mr. Cohen's idol and the subject of his 1973 biography—and the New Economic Policy, which is presented as a solution to Soviet Russia's current problems: for a start, the NEP was not a natural evolution of Leninism that, if institutionalized, might have given the Soviet state a different shape. It was strictly an emergency measure, which Lenin adopted in response to a catastrophic collapse of the Russian economy from the ravages of War Communism, and to the dangerous outbursts of popular unrest that ac-

companied it. Furthermore, it was never as revolutionary as Mr. Cohen claims when he asserts that the NEP “marketized” the entire Soviet economy of the 1920s. It actually turned over to market forces only a segment of the national economy, namely that which dealt with the consumer. In his admiration for the NEP, Mr. Cohen also ignores the fact that Lenin took advantage of the popularity of economic liberalization among workers and peasants to tighten the reins of his dictatorship. It was precisely during this economically liberal period that the Soviet government outlawed what was left of rival socialist parties, extended the institution of concentration camps, and introduced censorship for all publications.

Apart from the fact that Bukharin never came close to controlling any of the levers of power, which he would have had to control to become a serious contender to Stalin, it is questionable just how attractive an alternative to Stalin he presented. In late 1917, for example, he stood in the forefront of Communists who called for the forceful dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, the only democratically elected body in Russia's history. If he ever pro-

tested against the taking of hostages, the mass executions of the Cheka, the exactions of food from the peasants under War Communism, or the suppression of the press and rival political parties, the evidence has yet to come to light. In an embarrassed aside, Mr. Cohen concedes that Bukharin accepted the principles of the political system introduced by Lenin and developed by Stalin—a system that was to bring about his own political demise and death. And yet he persists in regarding Bukharinism as a “more liberal, humane variant of Russian Communism.” One suspects that he confuses the relatively appealing personality of his protagonist with his political ideology.

It should be critical to Mr. Cohen's argument to explain why Stalin defeated Bukharin. Neither book provides such an explanation except in the vaguest and most general terms. He argues that Soviet Russia on many occasions stood on the verge of moving toward political and social reform:

Ever since the birth of the Soviet system, groups in the top leadership or high political establishment have periodically advocated moderate, reformist, and even liberalizing domestic policies. Far more often

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than not, they have been defeated, even destroyed, by proponents of more despotic or conservative policies.

Why so? A less committed observer might find compelling reasons in internal factors, such as historic traditions and the vested interests of the political establishment. But Mr. Cohen dispenses with such considerations in favor of a unilinear explanation of foreign pressure:

At each . . . turning [point] in Soviet political history, a crisis or serious worsening in East-West relations played a crucial role in the defeat of moderates and reformers inside the Soviet establishment.

It is conceivable, of course, that such foreign policy crises, and the deterioration of East-West relations that resulted from them, were due to Soviet, not Western, actions. But Mr. Cohen does not even contemplate this possibility. The fault lies invariably on the Western side.

One may wonder what foreign developments accounted for the defeat of Bukharin and the momentous turn of the USSR toward Stalin. Mr. Cohen's answer is: "the perceived war scare of 1927." Now it so happens that in 1927 no external power threatened the Soviet Union. The "war scare" was artificially generated to permit Stalin to carry out the "rural holocaust," and to demand the other sacrifices from the rest of the population that his crash program of militarization required. How can the West be held responsible for Stalin's deliberately misperceived "war threat"?

IN BRINGING up to date the thesis that the West bears the blame for Soviet Russia's failure to reform, Mr. Cohen is compelled to pass over a great deal of evidence that contradicts it. Thus the entire period of détente, when the West went out of its way to accommodate the USSR, is treated ever so lightly. Suffice it to say that General de Gaulle, who launched the concept and took the first steps in its direction, goes unmentioned in either volume. The same fate befalls Willy Brandt, the father of *Ostpolitik*, which normalized relations between West Germany and the Soviet Union. And it surely takes remarkable aplomb in two books largely devoted to U.S.-Soviet relations to avoid mentioning the name of Henry Kissinger even once.

One may agree with Mr. Cohen that a reform of the Soviet system along the

lines of the NEP would represent a step in the right direction. But it would not, as he believes, solve that system's problems, since these run far too deep to be removed by a mere liberalization of the consumer sector of the economy. Still, to recommend a course of reform, it should not be necessary—for a Western scholar, at any rate—to reshape the record of history and to blame Soviet repression as well as aggression on the West. Even the invasion of Afghanistan, and "the broadening of the war" there, Mr. Cohen attributes to "the ideas of the Carter administration and the strategic crusade under President Reagan."

The Soviet Union is heir to a thou-

sand years of history, with its legacy of autocracy, serfdom, and anarchism. Its Communist elite is permeated with conservative ideas and worried that reform would cause it to lose its extraordinary power and privileges. Russia, a large and ancient country, is no inert matter, devoid of will and interests, capable only of reacting to Western initiatives. To view it as such is really to hold it in deep contempt.

RICHARD PIPES

Richard Pipes is the author most recently of *Survival Is Not Enough: Soviet Realities and America's Future* (Simon & Schuster).

CEDERS OF LEBANON

The War for Lebanon, 1970-1985

by Itamar Rabinovich

(Cornell University Press, 263 pp., \$9.95 paper)

One of the best remarks I ever heard in Beirut was uttered by U.S. Marine Capt. Keith Oliver on Sunday afternoon, February 5, 1984, a few hours before the Shiites and the Druse took over West Beirut from the Lebanese Army. As we walked out of the Marine headquarters at Beirut airport, a steady drumbeat of shelling between rival militias made conversation almost impossible. Captain Oliver was a native of Tennessee, and he brought to Lebanon a certain undiluted American perspective that was as incisive as it was misplaced. Listening for a moment to the whistle and the bang of the artillery exchanges, Captain Oliver shook his head and observed, "You know, these people just aren't playin' with the same sheet of music."

Lebanon these days seems beyond understanding, a war of all against all. Just when you think that the place has bottomed out, it reaches a new low. With the Lebanese civil conflict now in its tenth year, it has become impossible anymore to relate the daily killings and car bombs to any specific political programs or objectives of one militia or another. The violence has taken on a life and economy of its own. Captain Oliver was right: Lebanon has come to resem-

ble an orchestra playing wildly with neither a conductor nor a score.

Itamar Rabinovich, a noted Israeli scholar of Middle Eastern politics and the director of Tel Aviv University's Dayan Center, has written a very useful book explaining, to the extent that explanation is possible, the underlying logic of this endless conflict. His book is as clear, concise, and objective an analysis as can be found anywhere. Although it contains no particularly new revelations, *The War for Lebanon* may serve as a handy guide for the perplexed.

Rabinovich's book opens with a brief introduction on the Lebanese history that was the backdrop to the civil war, and lays out the two main contending theses about this troubled country. According to one school of thought, Lebanon was artificially patched together from religious communities, and therefore was doomed from the start to collapse in a conflict between those communities favoring change (the Moslems) and those favoring the status quo (the Maronites). The other school argues that Lebanon was a unique experiment in Middle Eastern pluralism that was "the victim of extraneous influences."

Without coming down firmly on either side, Rabinovich judiciously traces the evidence for both these arguments through the civil war of 1975-76, the Wild West era of militia rule before the Israeli invasion, the invasion and its aftermath, and up through the Gemayel administration and the current Shiite-Israeli conflict in the south. The interplay of American, Syrian, and Israeli policies are neatly interwoven with the domestic saga. Rabinovich also includes a helpful chapter describing the main political parties and factions. Although many American readers may have discovered the Lebanon conflict only with the Israeli invasion of 1982, Rabinovich very rightly dates the roots of the recent violence there to domestic and external contradictions beginning at least in 1970, if not much earlier.

HAVING witnessed much of the later period covered in this book, I could not help but ask myself whether indeed it was inevitable that Lebanon should have come to this miserable end. I don't think so. There was an instant of opportunity after the Israeli army withdrew from Beirut in September 1982, after the Syrian army had been shellacked and Amin Gemayel had taken over as president. It was a time when Lebanon seemed destined for a second chance. For a few shining moments a spirit of reconciliation existed, and there was nothing inevitable about what soured that spirit.

Where, then, does the blame lie? The main culprit, I believe, is President Amin Gemayel. Amin fooled a lot of people for a long time, including the Reagan administration—a point that Rabinovich makes too scoutishly. Amin was handsome, perfectly coiffed, he wore nicely tailored suits, and generally projected the image of an innocent young president trying to patch his country together. In reality he is a man of boundless mediocrity, who by a quirk of history was thrown into the presidency through the assassination of his younger brother Bashir. Petty, vain, mean-spirited, totally lacking in vision, Amin turned out to be the wrong man at the right time.

Both Druse leader Walid Jumblatt and Shiite leader Nabih Berri were ready to cooperate with Amin in patching Lebanon together after he assumed the presidency. At the beginning of his term, in fact, they almost begged for meetings with him. But rather than

make overtures to these men, the widely recognized leaders of their communities, Amin spurned them. He dismissed Jumblatt as a mountain peasant and Berri as someone unworthy of his company. He aligned himself instead with the effete and totally out of touch Druse, Shiite, and Sunni oligarchs. He used the time and the money that the Americans and the Israelis had bought for him with their military intervention not to reach a new entente with the rising Shiite and Druse forces, but to suppress them and, as Rabinovich notes, to "eschew the concessions that his Lebanese adversaries demanded."

Instead of seeking to reform the antiquated Lebanese political system in cooperation with those Lebanese Moslem forces who were both legitimate and still ready to play the Lebanese game, Amin pretended that it was 1943, that the Americans were the French, and that he was as powerful as the country's first Christian president, Bishara al-Khuri, had been four decades earlier. He, and his advisers, were fond of saying—when the Marines were around—that "the best guarantee of national reconciliation is the balance of power." Now that it has shifted radically against them, Amin and the Maronites will eventually have to make their peace with a radicalized Moslem community—a community that will no longer be ready or able to accept the kinds of moderate reforms it might have two years ago.

WHEN they were emboldened by American backing, the Maronites said, "Why should we make concessions, we are strong." When the Americans and the Israelis left, they said, "How can we make concessions, we are weak." Eventually Druse and Shiite aspirations for a share of power found a willing advocate in Syria, which had used the time Amin had wasted to rebuild its army and air defenses and to reassert itself in Lebanon, employing Amin's enemies as its lever.

Amin, of course, was not the only culprit. He was merely the biggest. The Reagan administration for too long swallowed Amin's line that his first priority was to build up his army as a bulwark against Syria and Israel, that only afterward could he worry about reforming the system. It took Washington a full year to wake up to the fact that the enemy in Lebanon was neither the Syrians nor the PLO nor the Israelis, but the

Lebanese and their inability to come to terms with one another. Pierre Gemayel's tired old shibboleth, that the Lebanese would settle their differences "in five minutes" as soon as all the foreigners were out of the country, was finally seen to be utter nonsense. The problem with the Lebanese was that they were always ready to concede to the outsider what they would never concede to each other. The Maronites were ready to give to Israel what they would never give to the Moslems. The Moslems were always ready to concede to the Syrians what they would never give to the Christians. They hated each other more than they loved their country.

NOT ONLY were the Americans oblivious to these Lebanese traits for too long, but as Rabinovich rightly points out, they were also pursuing in the Middle East what turned out to be two mutually exclusive agendas. On the one hand, Washington was seeking Syrian and Israeli cooperation in withdrawing from Lebanon, and on the other hand it was trying to entice Jordan and the PLO into accepting the Reagan Plan, which Syria and Israel rejected. It was no accident that only in April 1983, after it was clear to all parties that the Reagan initiative had collapsed, did it become possible, as Rabinovich puts it, to "expedite the signing of the Lebanese-Israeli agreement." Before then, Israel had been more than ready to obstruct progress in Lebanon in order to undermine the Reagan initiative.

But even the May 17 Lebanese-Israeli agreement proved to be "stillborn," adds Rabinovich, because the Syrians were no more party to it than they were to the Reagan Plan. After May 17 it was Syria's turn to play the spoiler; and because Israel lacked the stomach and America the will to stand up to Damascus, the Syrians were highly successful. The administration made a classic mistake of believing that its conventional military power could be translated into advantages in an unconventional theater of conflict, that the battleship *New Jersey* was a match for the lone suicide car-bomber with a truck full of TNT. While the Americans were playing by the Geneva conventions, Hafez al-Assad was playing by Hama rules, which are no rules. There was nothing inevitable about the Syrian victory; Assad merely understood the game better, and played it with all the ruthlessness it

required. There is a lesson in all of this for the current bout of Middle East peacemaking. If you want to advance the peace process with Jordan and the Palestinians, you have either to neutralize the Syrians, using their own tactics, or to invite them in. But to blithely proceed otherwise with the process is to ignore the lessons of Lebanon.

OF COURSE, there was nothing inevitable about Israel's behavior either. For too long Jerusalem adopted the nonsensical Maronite notion that the only problem with Lebanon was the Palestinians and the Syrians, and that as soon as they were out of the country everything would be sweetness and light among the Lebanese factions. When the Israelis began to realize the falsity of this view in the summer of 1983, they reacted not by trying to use their leverage to work out an entente between the different Lebanese groups, but by writing the whole place off and establishing separate relations, to the extent that it was possible, with each community—Druse, Christian, Shiite.

The turning point for Israel was the withdrawal from the Shouf mountains in August 1983. The Shouf was the physical and psychological heart of Lebanon. The original *modus vivendi* there between Druse and Maronites was symbolic of the wider Moslem-Christian power-sharing handshake that enabled the country to work. Had Israel remained in the Shouf and been able to hammer out an accord between the Druse and the Christians there, some hope for Lebanon's future might have been warranted. But by then Israel had become fed up with Lebanon; after a halfhearted attempt to get the Druse and Maronites together, Israel simply pulled out of the Shouf, leaving the two communities to rip the guts out of the middle of the country.

Any hope of putting together a strong central government or army after that was futile. Israel's Shouf withdrawal, Rabinovich succinctly notes, "amounted . . . to a statement renouncing Israel's ambitions to act on the central stage of Lebanon's politics and to take part in shaping them." It also reopened the door to Beirut for the Syrians. Although they did not recognize it at the time, several key Israeli policymakers now see the Shouf withdrawal decision as the beginning of the end for them in Lebanon. The intricacies of their decision-making at that time

have been seriously studied since in the defense and foreign policy establishments.

Israelis have grown as weary as the rest of the world with Lebanon. Although there can be no doubt that their invasion succeeded in destroying the Palestinian Liberation Organization as a semi-conventional military force, the price paid for that achievement was so high that few Israeli politicians will stand up in public and claim that it was worth it. This is particularly true since Yasir Arafat still seems to be around, haunting Israelis every night on the Jordanian television news. It was never the physical threat of the PLO that really bothered the Begin government. It was the existential threat, the implicit challenge to Israel's legitimacy that the PLO posed by its very existence. That threat still exists, which is why even Israeli right-wingers, though they might still defend the war, take little satisfaction in its outcome.

Israelis tend to look on Lebanon these days with a kind of sardonic amazement. The humor is gone now when reservists get together and talk about the crazy things they saw during their tours of duty there. They have gone from viewing Lebanon as a country that they could rearrange in their own image to viewing it as a country utterly without

logic or rationale. Which reminds me of my second favorite remark about Lebanon. At the Israeli Foreign Ministry a few months ago I bumped into a senior Israeli policymaker who had dealt extensively with Lebanon. This happened to be around the time that Samir Geagea had seized control of the Phalangist militia and had begun shelling the Moslems of Sidon for no apparent reason. The shelling, which Geagea could not sustain or translate into any political gains, provoked the Moslems of the town to get together not only to drive Geagea and his men back, but also to overrun many of the Christian villages in the area—ousting from their homes Christians who had been living peaceably alongside Moslems there for years. "Tell me," I asked the Israeli official, "why did Geagea do it? Why did he shell Sidon when it was certain to provoke a retaliation against all the Christians in the area?" He thought for a moment, rubbed his chin, and then said, as if the answer were obvious: "Because he had the ammunition."

THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN

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MAN OF THE MANSION

Bunny: The Real Story of Playboy by Russell Miller

(Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 371 pp., \$16.95)

The Killing of the Unicorn: Dorothy Stratten 1960-1980 by Peter Bogdanovich

(Morrow, 186 pp., \$12.95)

"Without precedent in the history of the magazine publishing world!" Hugh Hefner boasted in the monomaniacal diary he kept for years. Later, of course, there would be Guccione and Flynt. But in the 1950s, there was only Hef and his beloved *Playboy* magazine, the very first over-the-counter magazine in the history of America to use real tits and ass to move product. At first he had planned

to publish a picture-and-text city magazine called *Chi*, but once the big brain-storm hit he knew the invention of the city magazine would have to wait (as indeed it did, for nearly 20 years).

What Hef had in mind was so much bigger—a new magazine that would publish photographs of honest-to-goodness, living and breathing girls, young and pretty to boot, who would

undress for the camera and smile coyly at the "breezy, sophisticated, city-bred guy" whom Hef envisioned buying his publication. The era of the middle-aged nudist volleyball player, all bulges and wrinkles and sags, the staple of such lowbrow magazines as *Modern Sunbathing*, would be over.

Later too, of course, Hef's pioneering use of T&A as a marketing device was hailed in much more inflated terms. It was cited as proof that Hef was an American Publishing Genius, an identity he was particularly fond of. (A hilarious moment in modern documentary filmmaking occurs in a Canadian film of one of Hef's legendary Friday night parties: the host turns to the camera, his guests dancing furiously in the background, and says, "Genius is a funny kind of word. . . . I suppose by definition I consider myself one, both intellectually and in terms of creativity.") And it was part of the evidence proffered by *Playboy*, relentlessly and shamelessly, to show that its editor and publisher was a man of serious moral purpose.

Thus, in *Playboy* over the years we met Hef the sexual liberationist battling the right-wing legions of darkness; Hef the brave First Amendmentist battling the censors; even Hef the Philosopher. His *Playboy* Philosophy, originally planned as a two-part piece in *Playboy*, eventually ran over 250,000 words in 25 issues in the early 1960s. It was an endless, rambling discussion of sexual mores that culminated in a series of stultifyingly boring round-table debates between Hefner and three rather deferential clergymen. He ran rings around them, of course, as an editor will tend to do in his own magazine. (Today, *Playboy* still reverentially reprints excerpts from the Philosophy whenever the editors can find an excuse, and runs old photos of Hef, full of Pepsi and amphetamines, flailing away at the type-

writer—a man with a mission.) And most recently and ludicrously, we have met Hef the women's liberationist, the proof apparently being his willingness to liberate beautiful young Playmates from their clothes both in his magazine and in his bedroom.

Is there anyone in America who still buys the Hef Hype? I wonder. It's been nearly 20 years since *Time* put Hefner on the cover, breathlessly calling him (among many other things) "alive,

To be sure, Gay Talese swallowed the myth whole in *Thy Neighbor's Wife*, his 1980 book about the sexual revolution; but then Talese's motives in researching the book (for nine years!) were always a little suspect. And *Playboy* itself, of course, has continued to churn out self-congratulatory hype, continued to promote its publisher as the lonely voice of enlightenment—except that no one seems to be listening anymore. Gone are the days when a clever *Playboy* PR

man could get a rise out of the nation's clergy by sending free copies to ministers across the nation. Gone, too, are the publicity windfalls that came whenever some small-town postal clerk refused to distribute the magazine. Gone are the tough-minded interviews of people like Martin Luther King Jr. and Jimmy "I Have Lusted in My Heart" Carter that could make news, and the heady sense of respectability that came of publishing the biggest names in writing. I mean, do you know anyone today who reads *Playboy* "for the articles"? *Playboy* interviews are now more on the order of a friendly chat with Rob Reiner (the July issue). Even on the masturbatory fantasy front, *Playboy* has been outflanked by *Penthouse* and *Hustler*.

The magazine is in disarray. Circulation, which topped seven million in 1972, is now down to around four million, and struggling to stay that high. Advertising pages, within the trade the key barometer to a magazine's "heat," have dropped and dropped again. The most important editorial decision *Playboy* has made of late has been to tear up the September issue to make room for nude shots of Madonna and avoid being scooped by *Penthouse*, which was running its Madonna shots that month. Whatever else this move implies, it surely does not suggest American Publishing Genius. But then, outside of *Playboy's* caption writers, nobody has



HUGH HEFNER BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

American, modern, trustworthy, clean, respectful and . . . the prophet of pop hedonism." Twenty-three years have passed since Benjamin DeMott wrote his devastating appraisal of *Playboy* in *Commentary*: "In place of the citizen with a vote to cast or a job to do or a book to study or a god to worship, the editors offer a vision of the whole man reduced to his private parts." It was a condemnation that rebounded nicely to *Playboy's* advantage, since the very earnestness of DeMott's screed proved that *Playboy* was something to be taken seriously.

called Hugh Hefner a genius in a long, long time—including the authors of the books reviewed here.

Indeed the chief purpose of both books seems to be to kick Hefner while he's down, and in this they are quite successful, though in completely different ways. Russell Miller is a British journalist, with the British journalist's knack for skipping stones over the surface of a story. *Bunny: The Real Story of Playboy* is a once-over-lightly job that makes no pretense (beyond its title) of being anything else. Miller introduces a distinct and refreshing foreign point of view—a view that no American interested enough in *Playboy* to write a book about it could have ever brought to bear. Namely, that *Playboy* and Hefner have always counted for far less than they've been given credit for. Americans writing about *Playboy* have struggled to explain the deeper meaning of the *Playboy* phenomenon (see especially *Reaching for Paradise* by Thomas Weyr). Miller doesn't give a hoot about deeper meaning, mainly because he doesn't believe there is any. He punctures more than a few inflated balloons. Miller takes a devilish glee, for instance, in noting that Hefner championed one of his major causes—the funding of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML)—not so much because he wanted to get on his high horse and slay some right-wing dragons, but because he had recently been turned on to pot himself. According to Miller, Hefner would tell friends that pot “highlighted the difference between fucking and making love.”

MILLER finds Hefner's real significance in the very insignificance of much of his daily life and routine. He loves recounting old *Playboy* Mansion war stories about how Hef would have temper tantrums at 3 a.m. (his normal dinner hour) because his gravy was lumpy, or how once, while visiting Paris, he sent a trusted aide to Maxim's ahead of him so that the chef there would be sure to make his fried chicken the way he liked it.

The single best chapter in the book tells the unhappy story of Hefner's most trusted assistant, Bobbie Arnstein, who committed suicide rather than besmirch the *Playboy* name. Yes, she had gotten involved with some unsavory types, and yes, she had been indicted on a drug smuggling charge (although Miller makes plain his belief that the

charge was trumped up). But in Miller's mind, her real mistake was to take *Playboy* and Hefner so damn seriously in the first place. It was she who ruled the Chicago Mansion, on the one hand keeping the magazine's editors at bay while Hef was pouring out the *Playboy* Philosophy, and on the other procuring women for him, “making the approach herself to avoid the slight risk that he might suffer the embarrassment of a rejection.”

By the time she was 30, Arnstein was a deeply depressed woman, convinced she was “over the hill,” in large part because her boss “barely looked at a girl over 22.” When, to compensate, she began a series of pathetic relationships with much younger men, Hefner, oblivious to what was going on, pronounced this “groovy.” To him, this meant that she was finally living his gospel of sexual liberation. To Miller, it meant that “she thought the daffy world of *Playboy*, where young girls with big breasts were adored, mattered.”

YOU'VE probably heard a bit about Peter Bogdanovich's book by now. Hefner himself gave it a big promotional boost when he held a press conference several months ago to denounce it. (First he told the press that the book had caused him to have a stroke. Then he suggested that Bogdanovich had molested a minor. Then he invited the assembled press to stay for lunch.) *The Killing of the Unicorn* is Bogdanovich's version of the events leading up to the murder of Dorothy Stratten, *Playboy*'s 1980 Playmate of the Year and the woman he loved. Its essential plot goes like this: Dorothy Stratten, an innocent and beautiful 17-year-old girl working in a fast-food joint in Canada, falls in with a lowlife named Paul Snider. Snider practically forces her onto a plane to Los Angeles to pose for *Playboy*, seeing in her a meal ticket. Hefner falls for her in a big way, and tries to put the moves on her. She resists. He forces her to have sex with him in his Jacuzzi. And he makes her Playmate of the Year, seeing in her a meal ticket (he thinks she can be a star, something no Playmate has ever achieved). Then, one night at the Mansion, she makes eye contact with a brilliant yet sensitive movie director, and the sparks fly. And not a moment too soon either, because Bogdanovich, having had his fling with “devastating promiscuity,” has decided to stop coming to the *Playboy* Mansion.

“I had come to realize that the men of *Playboy* pursued women only for sex and rarely even had conversation with them.” Indeed.

ANYWAY, Bogdanovich instantly recognizes Dorothy's acting talent and casts her in his latest movie. They have a great time together shooting the movie in New York, 3,000 miles from her low-life husband. They fall in love. It turns out they have oodles in common; for instance (according to him) she hates Hefner and *Playboy* and so does he. Then Dorothy goes back to California, where her husband murders her and kills himself. There are many theories as to why he did this, but the main ones revolve around the fact that (a) Stratten had decided to dump him for Bogdanovich, and (b) Hefner had barred him from the *Playboy* Mansion, which is supposed to be a devastating blow to any lowlife looking for respectability. Bogdanovich prefers theory “b.” After Stratten's death, Bogdanovich encounters a series of mysterious coincidences. Here's one stunner: while reading a line from a play that she used to like, *the lights flicker on and off!* Bogdanovich is convinced he must search for the meaning of her death. Hence this book. It is an execrable business, as sleazy and exploitative as anything *Playboy* ever did to her. There are many low moments, but to my mind the lowest comes when Bogdanovich describes Stratten's last orgasm. (“When I looked again, Dorothy's eyes were tightly shut and I could tell that she was about to reach a climax.”)

Yet in between the playing of violins and the frothing at the mouth, Bogdanovich has painted a fairly devastating portrait of Hefner. When he stops linking *Playboy* to every depravity known to man and describes the gritty details of life and sex within the Mansion walls, his story squares with Miller's less purple portrait.

And what is that life like? Well, Hefner and his buddies sleep with an astonishing number of young women. No surprise there; Hefner practically banners his latest conquest on the cover of his magazine each month. But what he also says—what he has said ever since he started putting his “philosophy” on paper—is that sex must be based on mutual enjoyment and trust, that there must be equality in the bedroom, that relationships must be “open and honest,” and so on. “We certainly think

that personal sex is preferable to impersonal sex," he wrote in the early 1960s, "because it includes the greatest emotional rewards; but we can see no logical justification of opposing the latter, unless it is irresponsible, exploitive, coercive or in some way hurts one of the individuals involved." In its prose (as opposed to its photos), that has also always been at the heart of the guilt-free, carefree, no-strings-attached *Playboy* message. So where is this open, honest, nonexploitive, noncoercive fellow, this ultimate embodiment of all the values of the sexual revolution? In the pages of these two books, he is nowhere to be found. The man we meet here is a different, truer Hefner—Hef the Letch.

In Bogdanovich's book, whenever Hefner is not pawing Dorothy Stratten, he's trying to maneuver Bogdanovich and his friend Cybill Shepherd into a ménage à trois, or getting one of his "special ladies" (as his girlfriend of the moment is invariably called in *Playboy*) to participate in an orgy so he can watch. Miller, in an enterprising bit of reporting, found a former Bunny who recounted for him her life at the Playboy Mansion:

"After the first party I went home with one of Hefner's best friends and went to bed with him. There did not seem to be any reason not to. Then I started sleeping around with other guys, scores of them. . . . The atmosphere at the Mansion was that sex was free and everyone was doing it. . . . I couldn't seem to say no anymore. . . . It was as if there was nowhere to draw the line.

"One night I was invited to a special party at the Mansion with my roommate Libby. . . . I didn't know it at the time but we were being invited to an orgy. . . . I was with Hefner on the bed, with my roommate and another guy. The third man was with the two girls on the floor. . . . It all seemed very unreal. . . . The thing I remember most is that I kept my sunhat on the whole time; I think I felt no one would see me if I kept my hat on.

"When we were driving home. . . . I felt dirty, disgusted with myself. I couldn't believe what I had done. After that, nothing seemed to matter very much. I felt there was so much moral decay about the place that it did not matter what I did."

So much for "impersonal sex." But Hefner doesn't do all that much better when it comes to "personal sex," to use his felicitous phrase. Nothing is more illustrative of Hefner's view of relationships than the infamous story of his

simultaneous "special ladies"—Barbi Benton living in the Los Angeles Mansion and Karen Christi living in the Chicago Mansion. Miller retells the story, borrowing most of his facts from Talese (who naturally missed the point completely). The point was that Hugh Hefner, that champion of openness and honesty, had somehow forgotten to tell each girl about the other. When they finally read about each other in *Newsweek*, all hell broke loose. It turned out, you know, that Benton and Christi had these, you know, feelings. Jealousy. Resentment at having been lied to.

They had loved him and now they felt betrayed. Barbi Benton started talking about how she wanted to leave the Los Angeles Mansion to pursue her career. Karen Christi started talking about how she wanted a man to whom she would be the most important person in his life, not just "the one he fucks," as another Playmate put it to her one day. Meanwhile, Hefner was frantically flying from Los Angeles to Chicago and back in his silly black jet, throwing a mink coat at Barbi and a car at Karen, trying to buy back their love. He just couldn't understand what they were so upset about, why they weren't willing to share him, what they really wanted. Hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of presents later, he still lost both of them. They had outgrown him.

IS HEFNER HAPPY? He says he is. But in fact this lifelong fuckathon seems to add up to a fairly empty existence. Hefner's own life gives the lie to the message his magazine preaches. Perhaps that is why so many people have turned their backs on the sexual revolution: it just didn't work out the way they told us it would—the way *Playboy* (and *Cosmopolitan*, let's be fair about this) still says it should.

My own suspicion is that the people at *Playboy* are fully aware of this. That's one reason the magazine seems so empty these days, why the preaching seems so forced and defensive, why the pretensions seem so . . . pretentious. Of course the other reason is that it has always been impossible to square the magazine's ostensible philosophy of sexual equality and openness with the undeniable fact that the bulk of its profits are made by publishing photographs of naked women with their legs spread apart. It just doesn't compute. (The latest person to have to rationalize the non-rationalizable is Christie Hefner,



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his daughter, who now runs the *Playboy* empire, and whose contorted logic is more twisted than usual, since she claims to be a feminist.)

Inertia now seems to reign at *Playboy*. The thrill is gone, and it shows. I wonder how long that has been the case. I read a lot of old *Playboys* as I plowed through these books, and my main conclusion was that the magazine has never been as good as it was cracked up to be. First-rate authors learned early on that they could submit third-rate work to *Playboy* and get away with it. For every tough *Playboy* interview, there were a dozen duds. The thing *Playboy* did best then and does best now is excerpt books, which is more a result of deep pockets than editorial sensibility. And if the magazine has set off a couple of publishing revolutions, they've been mostly by accident.

THE FIRST revolution came about in the late 1950s, when *Esquire*, in reacting to *Playboy*, decided to stop running the Vargas girl and concentrate instead on putting out the best general interest magazine in the world; and when other magazines raced to compete with *Esquire* we entered the golden age of magazine journalism, a period that ended sometime in the early 1970s. The second revolution, of course, came when Bob Guccione decided to steal away some of *Playboy's* readership by starting *Penthouse*, and threw down the gauntlet of pubic hair and a whole lot more. ("The pin-ups without the hangups," Guccione advertised.) In so doing, of course, he paved the way for the "raunch books" like *Hustler* and *Chic*, which now litter the newsstands. What *Playboy* always had, then and now and forever—even as Christie Hefner desperately tries to "reposition the book" to get back some of those lost advertising pages—is naked young girls that can arouse the fantasies of a whole lot of American men. That's the vein in the American psyche that Hefner was the first to mine. Without the centerfolds, *Playboy* is dead.

This isn't exactly an original analysis. It's just that before he decided he was an American Publishing Genius, Hefner was a lot more honest about admitting it. In those days, when he was merely an out-of-work dreamer who wanted to publish a magazine and get rich in the process, he was perfectly happy to concede that the point of hav-

ing "girlie features" was that they would "guarantee sales." And in an early interview he offered a simpler explanation for *Playboy's* success than the tortured rationales that would come later. To wit: "If a guy digs a broad, you'd expect him to dig photos of broads. And if he doesn't dig broads, he's got a problem." Well, yes, that

was one way of looking at it. But as I say, that was before Hef the Genius and Hef the Philosopher and all the rest of it.

JOSEPH NOCERA

Joseph Nocera is a senior editor at *Texas Monthly*.

SPARK FLIES

The Stories of Muriel Spark

(E. P. Dutton, 314 pp., \$18.95)

That a slight movement of the curtains should be the sign of a summer breeze seems somewhere near to the truth, for to me truth has airy properties with buoyant and lyrical effects; and when anything drastic starts up from some light cause it only proves to me that something false has got into the world.

I'm not certain I fully understand the meaning of that sentence. In fact, the longer I ponder it the more obscure it seems. But it's the perfect keynote for a collection of Muriel Spark's short stories, not only because of its unfashionable nod to the existence of truth and falsehood—or good and evil—but because of its adjectives: "airy," "buoyant," "lyrical," "light." This is, after all, a woman who skims the polished surface of things, implying the darker shapes beneath. She writes an elegant, deft prose that fairly glitters. Her last name is so apt, you wonder if Charles Dickens made her up.

She's best known for her novels (*The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, *The Girls of Slender Means*, and 15 others), but she began her career as a short-story writer, and has continued to produce stories over the past 35 years—some set in her native Britain and some in Africa, where she lived for a time. The present volume combines the stories from three previous collections (*Collected Stories I*, *The Go-Away Bird*, *Voices at Play*) with others, more recent, which have so far appeared only in *The New Yorker* or *Mademoiselle*.

Reading this book straight through from the start (a piece narrated by a murdered woman) to the finish (a tale about a housekeeping ghost), one won-

ders if perhaps the short-story form has served as a kind of vent for Muriel Spark's quirkier self. Granted, her novels have their peculiar moments too, but many of these stories are almost savagely strange. There is something abrupt and defiant about them. "Believe this or not," she seems to be saying. "Take it or leave it, make of it whatever you like; I don't care." Whereupon she plunks before us a genuine seraph who tries to assume command of a church Nativity play; a group of Moon people who colonize Hampstead; and a soldier who sells handmade "abstract funerals" to people who die shortly thereafter.

In "The Black Madonna" a married couple pride themselves on socializing with two young black men; but when their infant daughter turns out unaccountably to be black as well, they are far from pleased. This is an early story, often praised for its condemnation of bigotry and insincerity; but I've always felt a sneaking sympathy for the couple. They seem not so much bigoted as baffled, and understandably upset by the hospital staff's suspicions. Here the take-it-or-leave-it is implied by the author's breezy treatment of the religious miracle that sets everything in motion. It is less a miracle than a convenient plot device—inconsistent, unexplained, unearned.

"The Go-Away Bird," an absorbing study of a white South African woman's lifelong Anglophilia, ends—or dwindles away—with her murder. It's a believable and natural murder (the killer has been stalking her throughout the story) but unsatisfying because of an al-

most casual shift in viewpoint, a swerve to other, peripheral characters. You'd think the author had all at once simply tired of her heroine and dumped her without a backward glance.

The stories that work are those that reflect the same care and patience that Muriel Spark has devoted to the best of her novels. They may be fantastic, but the fantasy is thoroughly thought out, as in "The First Year of My Life," which is narrated by a newborn baby. Here, we accept the impossible because it is erected for us brick by brick, with respect for the reader's intelligence: babies are born omniscient, we're told. It's all explained very reasonably, even pedantically, like something in *Psychology Today*.

"Miss Pinkerton's Apocalypse," which is pure whimsy, describes a flying saucer that is literally a saucer, most likely Spode, steered by a tiny pilot. This we accept because of the inspired descriptions, which impart their own sense of logic. The saucer makes a "faint throbbing noise," it goes "cavorting around the lamp," it executes "a stately turn, following the picture rail in a steady career round the room." No take-it-or-leave-it here; we are being enlisted, our credulity a matter of importance to the storyteller. When a dispute develops between Miss Pinkerton and another witness (she saw the pilot, he saw no one), we're ready to back her up in any court of law. We'll even testify to the grin on the pilot's little face.

Not all of the stories lean on fantasy, of course. "The Curtain Blown by the Breeze" describes how English nurses encourage a young Afrikaans woman to "better" herself, with tragic results. The story has real moral weight; it is enriching, fulfilling. "The Gentile Jewesses" is an evocative portrait of a family happily juggling its various religions, while "Bang-bang You're Dead" tells its tale of jealousy and envy by means of a most arresting device: an ancient home movie being viewed by its central character.

But it may be beside the point to say what these stories are about. Even the slightest of them reveals a nearly acrobatic skill with language. The "bright tough flowers" of the tropics, the "medieval unconsciousness" of strangers asleep on a train—these phrases are so right that we don't so much read them as recognize them. And for its absolute surefootedness, just admire the following:

This was a territory where you could not bathe in the gentlest stream but a germ from the water entered your kidneys and blighted your body for life; where you could not go for a walk before six in the evening without returning crazed by the sun; and in this remote part of the territory, largely occupied by poor whites amidst the overwhelming natural growth of natives, a young spinster could not keep a cat for a pet but it would be one day captured and pitifully shaved by the local white bachelors for fun; it was a place where the tall grass was dangerous from snakes and the floors dangerous from scorpions.

It's not always easy reading, this collection. If you're the sort who takes things personally you might initially feel insulted by the author's indifference to the reader, by her arbitrary plots and the country-club exclusiveness of her fantasies. But just when you're about to give up, she'll offer you a passage like the one above. Maybe we should think of Muriel Spark as a difficult but intelligent friend—spiky, demanding, eccentric, but well worth it all in the long run.

ANNE TYLER

TRB, from page 4

wants into the New York bar and the same lawyer who called her a fanatic calls her a harmless yuppie.

You may wonder how on earth a person with this record got hired by one of America's biggest and stuffiest law firms. The explanation is that her father-in-law, Thomas Ayers, is the former chairman of Commonwealth Edison Company and a doyen of the Chicago establishment. Ayers senior led the recently abandoned effort to get a 1992 World's Fair in Chicago. Sidley & Austin was counsel to the World's Fair Authority. Ayers is on the board of the Chicago Tribune Company. Don Reuben, a prominent Chicago attorney, is general counsel. And so on. Even without her radical baggage, a person who hadn't cracked a law book for 18 years couldn't ordinarily get hired at a place like Sidley. Thanks to her establishment ties, however, the managing partner is terribly understanding. "We're not going to hold her past against her," he says.

The New York attorney who is helping Dohrn get admitted to the bar

is Harold R. Tyler, former federal judge, former deputy attorney general, and name partner in the distinguished firm of Patterson, Belknap, Webb & Tyler. "She acts like a perfectly typical lawyer in a big firm," Tyler says. High praise indeed from a man like him.

It's hard to know which sight is more appalling: Bernadine Dohrn embracing the establishment or the establishment embracing Bernadine Dohrn. The entire spectacle reeks of contempt for serious politics. A lot of former radicals have become liberals and not a few have become conservatives, but they remain engaged in the struggle for what they see as a better world. Dohrn, if her high-priced apologists can be believed, is as contemptuous of this struggle as she ever was. (Bill Ayers used to talk of the need to "smash ideas . . . and combat liberalism in ourselves.") For Dohrn, it seems, there is no acceptable purpose in life between violent revolution and corporate litigation.

"The parents of 'privileged' kids [love those quotation marks!] have been saying that the revolution was a game for us," said Dohrn's July 1970 "declaration of war" from underground. She promised to prove them wrong. Now she's proved them right. And, of course, she's proved Dylan right as well.

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LOS ANGELES DIARIST

Selloutsmanship

LAST YEAR I FLIRTED with the idea of going into politics, and I got some strong advice from friends: apprentice yourself to an experienced pol. Or join Charles Manatt's law firm. Move to fast-growing Bakersfield. Work on local campaigns. Start small. Work up.

FOOLS! They do not understand the basic principle of modern life that lets you skip all this tedious dues-paying. It is the Falwell Principle, a simple two-step shortcut to the top. Let's say you want to be a respected religious leader. You could start preaching about the need for Christian morality, the humility of all before God, etc. But that's hardly going to distinguish you from the thousands of others saying the same things. You've got to get noticed. And that means, in Step One, going a bit crazy. Attack blacks, Jews, and gays. Imply that they're all part of a big conspiracy. Give yourself a name, like "Moral Majority," that's sure to scare the dickens out of anybody in a minority. Don't be bashful. Be a villain. The media will love it. In these matters celebrity is all, and you don't become celebritous by being respectable.

THERE'LL BE PLENTY of time for that in Step Two, once you're a famous and feared personality. Then you can soften your views. Visit Israel, perhaps. Invite Teddy Kennedy to your church for a joshing debate. Say you never meant to endorse discrimination. Your new reasonableness will be all the more prized because of your previous extreme unreasonableness. As for those poor suckers who were reasonable all along—you can just chuckle. Who's ever heard of them? The timing of Step Two is crucial. People must be paying attention. Charles Murray has played it just about perfectly. His attack on government antipoverty programs, *Losing Ground*, was written with the help of \$100,000 from the Lehrman Institute. You think they wanted some namby-pamby conclusion that wouldn't get noticed? Murray's book ends with the striking declaration that the "entire federal welfare and income support structure for working-aged persons" must be scrapped, leaving the poor "no recourse whatsoever except the job mar-

ket." That got our attention—who is this wild man?—and just when it did, Murray moved skillfully on to Step Two. "The stereotype of the teen-ager deciding to get pregnant so she can get on the dole does not fit my argument," he told *The Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*. The *L.A. Times* soon reported Murray's recommendation of two "new programs, one for job training and another for public service jobs." Sounds sensible, and Murray is now well on his way to becoming our most famous bleeding-heart conservative. Of course, if he'd said these sensible things in his book he'd still be a boring, unknown ex-social worker.

I PLEDGE TO RESIST the temptations of the Falwell Principle, but it won't be easy. The greatest practitioner of the Principle, after all, is our president, who waited until the climactic debate with Jimmy Carter to assure us he hadn't meant all those things he'd said about Social Security and the need for an arms race (the things that got him to the debate). Jack Kemp would clearly like to use the Principle to succeed Reagan, but his timing is off. He is moving to Step Two already—watering down his tax plan, saying everything to everybody—before he has scared enough people into paying attention, and so he's being perceived as a sellout rather than a statesman. Meanwhile, the man for whom the Principle is named has astonished its practitioners by violating its precepts and reverting to wacky outrageousness (Bishop Tutu "is a phony") more appropriate for an ambitious newcomer. Falwell's stock has fallen accordingly.

ONE WHO PLAYED Step One perfectly, and then blew it, was Louis Farrakhan. We were all ears when Farrakhan uncorked his scary anti-Semitism during the Jackson campaign. If Farrakhan had then made a conciliatory gesture, met with a group of rabbis, say, and said it was all a theological misunderstanding, his position as a black leader would have been assured. But Farrakhan wasn't pulling a Falwell. He actually believes this stuff. Most recently, Farrakhan was stirring up trouble in Los Angeles, where Mayor Tom Bradley ignored the urgings of Jewish leaders and

refused to condemn Farrakhan until after he had spoken. Bradley said he had promised black leaders he would keep quiet in the hopes of getting Farrakhan to restrain his remarks. Amazingly *The L.A. Times* editorial page followed suit, saying it "wanted to avoid violating the right of free speech with comments that might be construed as prior censorship." But how would it censor Farrakhan to criticize him? Criticism is what free speech is all about, and it's not as if Farrakhan's views don't count until he repeats in Los Angeles what he's been saying everywhere else. There is no explanation for the *Times*'s timidity other than its tendency to fancy itself an organ of government. Bradley's timidity, and that of the black leaders, is more interesting. They are not anti-Semites. Why risk derailing Bradley's gubernatorial campaign for fear of offending Farrakhan? The inescapable conclusion is that they were really afraid to offend the black constituents they supposedly lead, but among whom Farrakhan is more popular than they are.

THE EXPLANATION for Farrakhan's popularity is said to lie in his pitch for black "economic development," to which his anti-Semitism is just a distressing side-light. It was too bad, said the *Times*, that Farrakhan's bigotry had "obscured" his "program of self-help, his encouragement of self-respect," which "are vital messages that can change lives." "I can't imagine anybody disagreeing with that goal," said Bradley. Here is the real outrage in the behavior of Bradley and other black leaders, and of the *Times*. Farrakhan preaches self-help, all right, but it is self-help through separatism. Is this really a "vital message" to blacks? Does Bradley or anybody else think blacks will achieve "economic development" by selling each other black-made toothpaste and resisting assimilation into mainstream American culture? Farrakhan's vitriol may be frightening to whites, but his "economic message" is disastrous for blacks. A true black leader would have the guts to point this out. He might even be controversial enough to get noticed.

M.K.

Silent partners in world health

Schistosomiasis affects as many as 200 million people in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Puerto Rico and Latin America. It is often called "snail fever" because at one stage of their life cycle, *Schistosoma* worms infect snails that live on the bottom of rivers and streams. These parasites invade the skin of humans who drink, wash or swim in contaminated waters. They can cause severe itching, fever, diarrhea, and eventually irreversible damage to the liver. For 16 years, researchers visiting the island of St. Lucia in the Caribbean have been testing the practicality of various methods of control. Three approaches have proven to be most effective.

First, a public health team sprayed the rivers and streams of St. Lucia to get rid of infested snails. New plumbing facilities were constructed to assure a supply of uncontaminated water. Finally, treatment of people carrying the parasite was greatly facilitated by a drug developed and supplied by Pfizer. While previous treatments had to be given by injection, this drug was given orally only once, making it much simpler to reach a large number of people. The total control and elimination of the parasite is not yet a reality, but this combined medical and environmental program has done much to make life better for the people of the island.

Developing a drug such as this is a significant task that takes a decade or more and tens of millions of dollars. It generally involves the synthesis of hundreds of compounds in the organic chemistry laboratory. These compounds are then screened for antiparasitic activity. If one or more of them shows promise, the next step is to do toxicity studies and learn all about how the potential new drugs behave in laboratory animals. Only after completion of extensive, time-consuming animal studies can the drug be tested for safety and effectiveness in humans. And clinical trials in human patients can last for several years. If the clinical trials indicate that the drug should be made

available, new technology must be developed to produce it on a mass basis, and in cases like this, with little if any profitability for the developer.

Drug research and development isn't always "good theater." And it's largely a team endeavor generally without charismatic heroes. The days of Paul Ehrlich and his "magic bullet" are long past. The work of the pharmaceutical industry isn't usually the stuff of TV documentaries. More often, the industry has been the silent partner of government agencies, physicians, nurses and their associates working together to improve public health in St. Lucia and other developing countries.

In the Third World, pharmaceuticals are perhaps even more important than in advanced industrial countries. Often they are the only form of advanced medical technology which is practicable. Other forms of care, such as surgery, are often too cumbersome and too demanding of scarce resources. Drugs, by comparison, are portable, relatively inexpensive and comparatively simple to use.

The vast majority of drugs for the Third World and also for developed countries originate in the pharmaceutical industry. The government agencies do not have the broad expertise or resources for drug development, and medical schools and universities have different missions. Only the major research/pharmaceutical companies have the necessary skills and resources. Most manufacturers of generic drugs lack the research capabilities to create new drugs and test them for safety and efficacy. And that's only one reason an economically viable research-based pharmaceutical industry is important to all of us.

Pfizer is pleased to have been a partner in helping to reduce the hazards of one of the world's more widespread health problems. Pfizer is also pleased to be working on other solutions to similar health problems around the world.



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